POPULAR PATRISTICS SERIES



THE BOOK OF Pastoral Rule

St Gregory the Great

POPULAR PATRISTICS SERIES



THE BOOK OF Pastoral Rule

St Gregory the Great

Pastoral Rule

Pastoral Rule (Preface)

Preface

The title, *Liber Regulæ Pastoralis*, is the one adopted by the Benedictine Edition from several ancient mss ., being Gregory's own designation of his work when he sent it to his friend, Leander of Seville;— "Ut librum Regulæ Pastoralis, quem in episcopatus mei exordio scripsi...sanctitati tuæ transmitterem" (*Epp*. *Lib*. v., *Ep*. 49). The previously more usual one, *Liber Pastoralis Curæ*, may have been taken from the opening words of the book itself, "Pastoralis curæ me pondera fugere, etc." The book was issued (as appears from the passage above quoted in the Epistle to Leander) at the commencement of Gregory's episcopacy, and (as appears from its opening words) addressed to John, bishop of Ravenna, in reply to a letter received from him. But, though put into form for a special purpose on this occasion, it must have been the issue of long previous thought, as is further evident from the fact that in his *Magna Moralia*, or Commentary on the Book of Job, begun and in a great measure written during his residence in Constantinople, he had already sketched the plan of such a treatise, and expressed the hope of some day putting it into form. For we there find the prologue to the third book of the Regula already written, together with most of the headings contained in the first chapter of that book, followed by the words, "And indeed we ought to have denoted particularly what should be the order of admonition with respect to each of these points; but fear of prolixity deters us. Yet, with God's help, we hope to complete this task in another work, should some little time of this laborious life still remain to us" (*Moral*. *Lib*. xxx. c. 12 and 13).

The book appears to have been estimated as it deserved during the writer's life. It was sent by him, as we have seen, to Leander of Seville, apparently at the request of the latter, for the benefit of the Church in Spain; and there will be found among the Epistles one addressed to Gregory from Licinianus, a learned bishop of Carthagena in that country, in which it is highly praised, though a fear is expressed lest the standard required in it of fitness for the

episcopal office might prove too high for ordinary attainment (*Epp. Lib*. II., *Ep*. 54). The Emperor Maurice, having requested and obtained a copy of it from Anatolius, Gregory's deacon at Constantinople, had it translated into Greek by Anastasius the patriarch of Antioch, who himself highly approved of it (*Epp. Lib*. XII., *Ep*. 24). It appears to have been taken to England by the Monk Augustine. This is asserted by Alfred the Great, who, nearly three hundred years afterwards, with the assistance of his divines, made a translation, or rather paraphrase, of it in the West Saxon tongue, intending, as he says, to send a copy to every bishop in his Kingdom.

Previously to this, there is evidence of the high repute in which the book was held in Gaul. In a series of councils held by command of Charlemagne, a.d. 813—viz. at Mayence, Rheims, Tours, and Châlon-sur-Seine— the study of it was specially enjoined on all bishops, together with the New Testament Scriptures and the Canons of the Fathers. Similarly at a Council held at Aix-la-Chapelle, a.d. 836. Further, it appears from a letter of Hincmar , Archbishop of Rheims (a.d. 845-882), that a copy of it together with the Book of Canons was given into the hands of bishops before the altar at their consecration, and that they were admonished to frame their lives accordingly.

The work is well worthy of its old repute, being the best of its kind, and profitable for all ages. Two similar works had preceded it. First, that of Gregory Nazianzen (c. a.d. 362), known as his second oration, and called τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀπολογητικός, which was written, like that of the later Gregory, to excuse the writer's reluctance to accept the episcopate, and to set forth the responsibilities of the office. It is obvious, from comparing the two treatises, that the earlier had suggested the later one; and indeed Pope Gregory acknowledges his indebtedness in his prologue to the second book of the *Regula*. The second somewhat similar treatise had been that of Chrysostom, 'De Sacerdotio,' in six books, c. a.d. 382. It also sets forth the awful responsibilities of the episcopal office; but there are no signs of pope Gregory having drawn from it.

It is to be observed that the subject of all these treatises is the office of episcopacy; not the pastoral or priestly office in its wider sense, as

now commonly understood: and it is noteworthy how prominent in Gregory's view of it are the duties of preaching and spiritual guidance of souls. It is regarded, indeed, in the first place as an office of government— *locus regiminis, culmen regiminis*, denote it frequently— and hence the exercise of discipline comes prominently in; and the chief pastor is viewed also as an intercessor between his flock and God— See e.g. I. 10—but it is especially as a teacher, and a physician of souls, that he is spoken of throughout the treatise; as one whose peculiar duty it is to be conversant with all forms of spiritual disease, and so be able to suit his treatment to all cases, to "preach the word, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine," and both by precept and example guide souls in the way of salvation. Gregory had not studied in vain the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul. Remarkable indeed is his own discriminating insight, displayed throughout, into human characters and motives, and his perception of the temptations to which circumstances or temperament render various people— pastors as well as members of their flocks— peculiarly liable. No less striking, in this as in other works of his, is his intimate acquaintance with the whole of Holy Scripture. He knew it indeed through the Latin version only; his critical knowledge is frequently at fault; and far-fetched mystical interpretations, such as he delighted in, abound. But as a true expounder of its general moral and religious teaching he well deserves his name as one of the great Doctors of the Church. And, further, notwithstanding all his reverence for Councils and Fathers, as paramount authorities in matters of faith, it is to Scripture that he ever appeals as the final authority for conduct and belief.

Introduction

Gregory to his most reverend and most holy brother and fellow-bishop, John.

With kind and humble intent you reprove me, dearest brother, for having wished by hiding myself to fly from the burdens of pastoral care; as to which, lest to some they should appear light, I express with my pen in the book before you all my own estimate of their heaviness, in order both that he who is free from them may not unwarily seek them, and that he who has so sought them may tremble for having got them. This book is divided into four separate heads of argument, that it may approach the reader's mind by allegations arranged in order— by certain steps, as it were. For, as the necessity of things requires, we must especially consider after what manner every one should come to supreme rule; and, duly arriving at it, after what manner he should live; and, living well, after what manner he should teach; and, teaching aright, with how great consideration every day he should become aware of his own infirmity; lest either humility fly from the approach, or life be at variance with the arrival, or teaching be wanting to the life, or presumption unduly exalt the teaching. Wherefore, let fear temper the desire; but afterwards, authority being assumed by one who sought it not, let his life commend it. But then it is necessary that the good which is displayed in the life of the pastor should also be propagated by his speech. And at last it remains that, whatever works are brought to perfection, consideration of our own infirmity should depress us with regard to them, lest the swelling of elation extinguish even them before the eyes of hidden judgment. But inasmuch as there are many, like me in unskilfulness, who, while they know not how to measure themselves, are covetous of teaching what they have not learned; who estimate lightly the burden of authority in proportion as they are ignorant of the pressure of its greatness; let them be reproved from the very beginning of this book; so that, while, unlearned and precipitate, they desire to hold the citadel of teaching, they may be repelled at the very door of our discourse from the ventures of their precipitancy.

Chapter 1

That the unskilful venture not to approach an office of authority.

No one presumes to teach an art till he has first, with intent meditation, learned it. What rashness is it, then, for the unskilful to assume pastoral authority, since the government of souls is the art of arts! For who can be ignorant that the sores of the thoughts of men are more occult than the sores of the bowels? And yet how often do men who have no knowledge whatever of spiritual precepts fearlessly profess themselves physicians of the heart, though those who are ignorant of the effect of drugs blush to appear as physicians of the flesh! But because, through the ordering of God, all the highest in rank of this present age are inclined to reverence religion, there are some who, through the outward show of rule within the holy Church, affect the glory of distinction. They desire to appear as teachers, they covet superiority to others, and, as the Truth attests, they seek the first salutations in the market-place, the first rooms at feasts, the first seats in assemblies Matthew 23:6-7, being all the less able to administer worthily the office they have undertaken of pastoral care, as they have reached the magisterial position of humility out of elation only. For, indeed, in a magisterial position language itself is confounded when one thing is learned and another taught. Against such the Lord complains by the prophet, saying, *They have reigned, and not by Me; they have been set up as princes, and I knew it not* Hosea 8:4. For those reign of themselves, and not by the Will of the Supreme Ruler, who, supported by no virtues, and in no way divinely called, but inflamed by their own desire, seize rather than attain supreme rule. But them the Judge within both advances, and yet knows not; for whom by permission he tolerates them surely by the judgment of reprobation he ignores. Whence to some who come to Him even after miracles He says, *Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity, I know you not who you are* Luke 13:27. The unskilfulness of shepherds is rebuked by the voice of the Truth, when it is said through the prophet, *The shepherds themselves have not known understanding* Isaiah 56:11; whom again the Lord denounces, saying,

And they that handle the law knew Me not Jeremiah 2:8. And therefore the Truth complains of not being known of them, and protests that He knows not the principality of those who know not Him; because in truth these who know not the things of the Lord are unknown of the Lord; as Paul attests, who says, *But if any man knows not, he shall not be known* 1 Corinthians 14:38. Yet this unskilfulness of the shepherds doubtless suits often the deserts of those who are subject to them, because, though it is their own fault that they have not the light of knowledge, yet it is in the dealing of strict judgment that through their ignorance those also who follow them should stumble. Hence it is that, in the Gospel, the Truth in person says, *If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch* Matthew 15:14. Hence the Psalmist (not expressing his own desire, but in his ministry as a prophet) denounces such, when he says, *Let their eyes be blinded that they see not, and ever bow down their back* Psalm 68:24. For, indeed, those persons are eyes who, placed in the very face of the highest dignity, have undertaken the office of spying out the road; while those who are attached to them and follow them are denominated backs. And so, when the eyes are blinded, the back is bent, because, when those who go before lose the light of knowledge, those who follow are bowed down to carry the burden of their sins.

Chapter 2

That none should enter on a place of government who practise not in life what they have learned by study.

There are some also who investigate spiritual precepts with cunning care, but what they penetrate with their understanding they trample on in their lives: all at once they teach the things which not by practice but by study they have learned; and what in words they preach by their manners they impugn. Whence it comes to pass that when the shepherd walks through steep places, the flock follows to the precipice. Hence it is that the Lord through the prophet complains of the contemptible knowledge of shepherds, saying, *When you yourselves had drunk most pure water, you fouled the residue with your feet; and My sheep fed on that which had been trodden by your feet, and drank that which your feet had fouled* Ezekiel 34:18-19. For indeed the shepherds drink most pure water, when with a right understanding they imbibe the streams of truth. But to foul the same water with their feet is to corrupt the studies of holy meditation by evil living. And verily the sheep drink the water fouled by their feet, when any of those subject to them follow not the words which they hear, but only imitate the bad examples which they see. Thirsting for the things said, but perverted by the works observed, they take in mud with their draughts, as from polluted fountains. Hence also it is written through the prophet, *A snare for the downfall of my people are evil priests* Hosea 5:1; 9:8. Hence again the Lord through the prophet says of the priests, *They are made to be for a stumbling-block of iniquity to the house of Israel*. For certainly no one does more harm in the Church than one who has the name and rank of sanctity, while he acts perversely. For him, when he transgresses, no one presumes to take to task; and the offense spreads forcibly for example, when out of reverence to his rank the sinner is honoured. But all who are unworthy would fly from the burden of so great guilt, if with the attentive ear of the heart they weighed the sentence of the Truth, *Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the*

depth of the sea Matthew 18:6. By the millstone is expressed the round and labour of worldly life, and by the depth of the sea is denoted final damnation. Whosoever, then, having come to bear the outward show of sanctity, either by word or example destroys others, it had indeed been better for him that earthly deeds in open guise should press him down to death than that sacred offices should point him out to others as imitable in his wrong-doing; because, surely, if he fell alone, the pains of hell would torment him in more tolerable degree.

Chapter 3

Of the weight of government; and that all manner of adversity is to be despised, and prosperity feared.

So much, then, have we briefly said, to show how great is the weight of government, lest whosoever is unequal to sacred offices of government should dare to profane them, and through lust of pre-eminence undertake a leadership of perdition. For hence it is that James affectionately deters us, saying, Be not made many masters, my brethren James 3:1. Hence the Mediator between God and man Himself— He who, transcending the knowledge and understanding even of supernal spirits, reigns in heaven from eternity— on earth fled from receiving a kingdom. For it is written, *When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take Him by force, to make Him a king, He departed again into the mountain Himself alone* John 6:15. For who could so blamelessly have had principality over men as He who would in fact have reigned over those whom He had Himself created? But, because He had come in the flesh to this end, that He might not only redeem us by His passion but also teach us by His conversation, offering Himself as an example to His followers, He would not be made a king; but He went of His own accord to the gibbet of the cross. He fled from the offered glory of pre-eminence, but desired the pain of an ignominious death; that so His members might learn to fly from the favours of the world, to be afraid of no terrors, to love adversity for the truth's sake, and to shrink in fear from prosperity; because this often defiles the heart through vain glory, while that purges it through sorrow; in this the mind exalts itself, but in that, even though it had once exalted itself, it brings itself low; in this man forgets himself, but in that, even perforce and against his will, he is recalled to memory of what he is; in this even good things done aforetime often come to nothing, but in that faults even of long standing are wiped away. For commonly in the school of adversity the heart is subdued under discipline, while, on sudden attainment of supreme rule, it is immediately changed and becomes elated through familiarity with glory. Thus Saul, who had before fled in consideration of his unworthiness, no sooner had

assumed the government of the kingdom than he was puffed up 1 Kings 10:22; 15:17-30; for, desirous of being honoured before the people while unwilling to be publicly blamed, he cut off from himself even him who had anointed him to the kingdom. Thus David, who in the judgment of Him who chose him was well pleasing to Him in almost all his deeds, as soon as the weight of pressure was removed, broke out into a swelling sore 2 Kings 11:3, *seq*, and, having been as a laxly running one in his appetite for the woman, became as a cruelly hard one in the slaughter of the man; and he who had before known pitifully how to spare the bad learned afterwards, without impediment of hesitation, to pant even for the death of the good 2 Kings 11:15. For, indeed, previously he had been unwilling to smite his captured persecutor; and afterwards, with loss to his wearied army, he destroyed even his devoted soldier. And in truth his crime would have snatched him farther away from the number of the elect, had not scourges called him back to pardon.

Chapter 4

That for the most part the occupation of government dissipates the solidity of the mind.

Often the care of government, when undertaken, distracts the heart in various directions; and one is found unequal to dealing with particular things, while with confused mind divided among many. Whence a certain wise man providently dissuades, saying, *My son, meddle not with many matters* Sirach 11:10; because, that is, the mind is by no means collected on the plan of any single work while parted among various. And, when it is drawn abroad by unwonted care, it is emptied of the solidity of inward fear: it becomes anxious in the ordering of things that are without, and, ignorant of itself alone, knows how to think of many things, while itself it knows not. For, when it implicates itself more than is needful in things that are without, it is as though it were so occupied during a journey as to forget where it was going; so that, being estranged from the business of self-examination, it does not even consider the losses it is suffering, or know how great they are. For neither did Hezekiah believe himself to be sinning 2 Kings 20:13, when he showed to the strangers who came to him his storehouses of spices; but he fell under the anger of the judge, to the condemnation of his future offspring, from what he supposed himself to be doing lawfully Isaiah 39:4. Often, when means are abundant, and many things can be done for subordinates to admire, the mind exalts itself in thought, and fully provokes to itself the anger of the judge, though not breaking out in overt acts of iniquity. For he who judges is within; that which is judged is within. When, then, in heart we transgress, what we are doing within ourselves is hidden from men. but yet in the eyes of the judge we sin. For neither did the King of Babylon then first stand guilty of elation Daniel 4:16, *seq* when he came to utter words of elation, inasmuch as even before, when he had given no utterance to his elation, he heard the sentence of reprobation from the prophet's mouth. For he had already wiped off the fault of the pride he had been guilty of, when he proclaimed to all the nations under him the omnipotent God whom he found himself to have offended.

But after this, elevated by the success of his dominion, and rejoicing in having done great things, he first preferred himself to all in thought, and afterwards, still vain-glorious, said, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, and in the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?* Daniel 4:30 Which utterance of his, as we see, fell openly under the vengeance of the wrath which his hidden elation kindled. For the strict judge first sees invisibly what he afterwards reproves by publicly smiting it. Hence him He turned even into an irrational animal, separated him from human society, changed his mind and joined him to the beasts of the field, that in obviously strict and just judgment he who had esteemed himself great beyond men should lose even his being as a man. Now in adducing these things we are not finding fault with dominion, but guarding the infirmity of the heart from coveting it, lest any that are imperfect should venture to snatch at supreme rule, or those who stumble on plain ground set foot on a precipice.

Chapter 5

Of those who are able to profit others by virtuous example in supreme rule, but fly from it in pursuit of their own ease.

For there are some who are eminently endowed with virtues, and for the training of others are exalted by great gifts, who are pure in zeal for chastity, strong in the might of abstinence, filled with the feasts of doctrine, humble in the long-suffering of patience, erect in the fortitude of authority, tender in the grace of loving-kindness, strict in the severity of justice. Truly such as these, if when called they refuse to undertake offices of supreme rule, for the most part deprive themselves of the very gifts which they received not for themselves alone, but for others also; and, while they meditate their own and not another's gain, they forfeit the very benefits which they desire to keep to themselves. For hence it was that the Truth said to His disciples, *A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid: neither do they light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house* Matthew 5:15. Hence He says to Peter, *Simon, Son of Jonas, do you love Me?* John 15:16-17; and he, when he had at once answered that he loved, was told, *If you love Me, feed My sheep*. If, then, the care of feeding is the proof of loving, whosoever abounds in virtues, and yet refuses to feed the flock of God, is convicted of not loving the chief Shepherd. Hence Paul says, *If Christ died for all, then all died. And if He died for all, it remains that they which live should now no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again* 2 Corinthians 5:15. Hence Moses says Deuteronomy 25:5 that a surviving brother shall take to him the wife of a brother who has died without children, and beget children to the name of his brother; and that, if he haply refuse to take her, the woman shall spit in his face, and her kinsman shall loose the shoe from off one of his feet, and call his habitation the house of him that has his shoe loosed. Now the deceased brother is He who, after the glory of the resurrection, said, *Go tell My brethren* Matthew 28:10. For He died as it were without children, in that He had not yet filled up the number of His elect. Then, it is ordered that the

surviving brother shall have the wife assigned to him, because it is surely fit that the care of holy Church be imposed on him who is best able to rule it well. But, should he be unwilling, the woman spits in his face, because whosoever cares not to benefit others out of the gifts which he has received, the holy Church exprobrates even what he has of good, and, as it were, casts spittle on his face; and from one foot the shoe is taken away, inasmuch as it is written, *Your feet shod in preparation of the Gospel of Peace* Ephesians 6:15. If, then, we have the care of our neighbour as well as of ourselves upon us, we have each foot protected by a shoe. But he who, meditating his own advantage, neglects that of his neighbours, loses with disgrace one foot's shoe. And so there are some, as we have said, enriched with great gifts, who, while they are ardent for the studies of contemplation only, shrink from serving to their neighbour's benefit by preaching; they love a secret place of quiet, they long for a retreat for speculation. With respect to which conduct, they are, if strictly judged, undoubtedly guilty in proportion to the greatness of the gifts whereby they might have been publicly useful. For with what disposition of mind does one who might be conspicuous in profiting his neighbours prefer his own privacy to the advantage of others, when the Only-begotten of the supreme Father Himself came forth from the bosom of the Father into the midst of us all, that He might profit many?

Chapter 6

That those who fly from the burden of rule through humility are then truly humble when they resist not the divine decrees.

There are some also who fly by reason only of their humility, lest they should be preferred to others to whom they esteem themselves unequal. And theirs, indeed, if it be surrounded by other virtues, is then true humility before the eyes of God, when it is not pertinacious in rejecting what it is enjoined to undertake with profit. For neither is he truly humble, who understands how the good pleasure of the Supernal Will ought to bear sway, and yet contemns its sway. But, submitting himself to the divine disposals, and averse from the vice of obstinacy, if he be already prevented with gifts whereby he may profit others also, he ought, when enjoined to undertake supreme rule, in his heart to flee from it, but against his will to obey.

Chapter 7

That sometimes some laudably desire the office of preaching, while others, as laudably, are drawn to it by compulsion.

Although sometimes some laudably desire the office of preaching, yet others are as laudably drawn to it by compulsion; as we plainly perceive, if we consider the conduct of two prophets, one of whom offered himself of his own accord to be sent to preach, yet the other in fear refused to go. For Isaiah, when the Lord asked whom He should send, offered himself of his own accord, saying, *Here I am; send me* Isaiah 6:8. But Jeremiah is sent, yet humbly pleads that he should not be sent, saying, *Ah, Lord God! Behold I cannot speak: for I am a child* Jeremiah 1:6. Lo, from these two men different voices proceeded outwardly, but they flowed from the same fountain of love. For there are two precepts of charity; the love of God and of our neighbour. Wherefore Isaiah, eager to profit his neighbours through an active life, desires the office of preaching; but Jeremiah, longing to cleave sedulously to the love of his Creator through a contemplative life, remonstrates against being sent to preach. Thus what the one laudably desired the other laudably shrunk from; the latter, lest by speaking he should lose the gains of silent contemplation; the former, lest by keeping silence he should suffer loss for lack of diligent work. But this in both cases is to be nicely observed, that he who refused did not persist in his refusal, and he who wished to be sent saw himself previously cleansed by a coal of the altar; lest any one who has not been purged should dare to approach sacred ministries, or any whom supernal grace has chosen should proudly gainsay it under a show of humility. Wherefore, since it is very difficult for any one to be sure that he has been cleansed, it is safer to decline the office of preaching, though (as we have said) it should not be declined pertinaciously when the Supernal Will that it should be undertaken is recognized. Both requirements Moses marvellously fulfilled, who was unwilling to be set over so great a multitude, and yet obeyed. For perhaps he were proud, were he to undertake without trepidation the leadership of that innumerable

people; and, again, proud he would plainly be were he to refuse to obey his Lord's command. Thus in both ways humble, in both ways submissive, he was unwilling, as measuring himself, to be set over the people; and yet, as presuming on the might of Him who commanded him, he consented. Hence, then, hence let all rash ones infer how great guilt is theirs, if they fear not to be preferred to others by their own seeking, when holy men, even when God commanded, feared to undertake the leadership of peoples. Moses trembles though God persuades him; and yet every weak one pants to assume the burden of dignity; and one who can hardly bear his own load without falling, gladly puts his shoulders under the pressure of others not his own: his own deeds are too heavy for him to carry, and he augments his burden.

Chapter 8

Of those who covet pre-eminence, and seize on the language of the Apostle to serve the purpose of their own cupidity.

But for the most part those who covet pre-eminence seize on the language of the Apostle to serve the purpose of their own cupidity, where he says, *If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work* 1 Timothy 3:1. But, while praising the desire, he immediately turns what he has praised to fear when at once he adds, *but a bishop must be blameless* 1 Timothy 3:2. And, when he subsequently enumerates the necessary virtues, he makes manifest what this blamelessness consists in. And so, with regard to their desire, he approves them, but by his precept he alarms them; as if saying plainly, I praise what you seek; but first learn what it is you seek; lest, while you neglect to measure yourselves, your blamefulness appear all the fouler for its haste to be seen by all in the highest place of honour. For the great master in the art of ruling impels by approval and checks by alarms; so that, by describing the height of blamelessness, he may restrain his hearers from pride, and, by praising the office which is sought, dispose them to the life required. Nevertheless it is to be noted that this was said at a time when whosoever was set over people was usually the first to be led to the torments of martyrdom. At that time, therefore, it was laudable to seek the office of a bishop, since through it there was no doubt that a man would come in the end to heavier pains. Hence even the office of a bishop itself is defined as a good work, when it is said, *If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work* 1 Timothy 3:1. Wherefore he that seeks, not this ministry of a good work, but the glory of distinction, is himself a witness against himself that he does not desire the office of a bishop; inasmuch as that man not only does not love at all the sacred office, but even knows not what it is, who, panting after supreme rule, is fed by the subjection of others in the hidden meditation of his thought, rejoices in his own praises, lifts up his heart to honour, exults in abundant affluence. Thus worldly gain is sought under colour of that honour by which worldly gains should

have been destroyed; and, when the mind thinks to seize on the highest post of humility for its own elation, it inwardly changes what it outwardly desires.

Chapter 9

That the mind of those who wish for pre-eminence for the most part flatters itself with a feigned promise of good works.

But for the most part those who covet pastoral authority mentally propose to themselves some good works besides, and, though desiring it with a motive of pride, still muse how they will effect great things: and so it comes to pass that the motive suppressed in the depths of the heart is one thing, another what the surface of thought presents to the muser's mind. For the mind itself lies to itself about itself, and feigns with respect to good work to love what it does not love, and with respect to the world's glory not to love what it does love. Eager for domination, it becomes timid with regard to it while in pursuit, audacious after attainment. For, while advancing towards it, it is in trepidation lest it should not attain it; but all at once, on having attained, thinks what it has attained to be its just due. And, when it has once begun to enjoy the office of its acquired dominion in a worldly way, it willingly forgets what it has cogitated in a religious way. Hence it is necessary that, when such cogitation is extended beyond wont, the mind's eye should be recalled to works already accomplished, and that every one should consider what he has done as a subordinate; and so may he at once discover whether as a prelate he will be able to do the good things he has proposed to do. For one can by no means learn humility in a high place who has not ceased to be proud while occupying a low one: one knows not how to fly from praise when it abounds, who has learned to pant for it when it was wanting: one can by no means overcome avarice, when advanced to the sustentation of many, whom his own means could not suffice for himself alone. Wherefore from his past life let every one discover what he is, lest in his craving for eminence the phantom of his cogitation illude him. Nevertheless it is generally the case that the very practice of good deeds which was maintained in tranquillity is lost in the occupation of government; since even an unskilful person guides a ship along a straight course in a calm sea; but in one disturbed by the waves of tempest even the skilled sailor is

confounded. For what is eminent dominion but a tempest of the mind, in which the ship of the heart is ever shaken by hurricanes of thought, is incessantly driven hither and there, so as to be shattered by sudden excesses of word and deed, as if by opposing rocks? In the midst of all these dangers, then, what course is to be followed, what is to be held to, except that one who abounds in virtues should accede to government under compulsion, and that one who is void of virtues should not, even under compulsion, approach it? As to the former, let him beware lest, if he refuses altogether, he be as one who binds up in a napkin the money which he has received, and be judged for hiding it Matthew 25:18. For, indeed, to bind up in a napkin is to hide gifts received under the listlessness of sluggish torpor. But, on the other hand, let the latter, when he craves government, take care lest, by his example of evil deeds, he become an obstacle to such as are journeying to the entrance of the kingdom, after the manner of the Pharisees, who, according to the Master's voice Matthew 23:13, neither go in themselves nor suffer others to go in. And he should also consider how, when an elected prelate undertakes the cause of the people, he goes, as it were, as a physician to one that is sick. If, then, ailments still live in his body, what presumption is his, to make haste to heal the smitten, while in his own face carrying a sore!

Chapter 10

What manner of man ought to come to rule.

That man, therefore, ought by all means to be drawn with cords to be an example of good living who already lives spiritually, dying to all passions of the flesh; who disregards worldly prosperity; who is afraid of no adversity; who desires only inward wealth; whose intention the body, in good accord with it, thwarts not at all by its frailness, nor the spirit greatly by its disdain: one who is not led to covet the things of others, but gives freely of his own; who through the bowels of compassion is quickly moved to pardon, yet is never bent down from the fortress of rectitude by pardoning more than is meet; who perpetrates no unlawful deeds, yet deplores those perpetrated by others as though they were his own; who out of affection of heart sympathizes with another's infirmity, and so rejoices in the good of his neighbour as though it were his own advantage; who so insinuates himself as an example to others in all he does that among them he has nothing, at any rate of his own past deeds, to blush for; who studies so to live that he may be able to water even dry hearts with the streams of doctrine; who has already learned by the use and trial of prayer that he can obtain what he has requested from the Lord, having had already said to him, as it were, through the voice of experience, *While you are yet speaking, I will say, Here am I* Isaiah 58:9. For if perchance any one should come to us asking us to intercede for him with some great man, who was incensed against him, but to us unknown, we should at once reply, We cannot go to intercede for you, since we have no familiar acquaintance with that man. If, then, a man blushes to become an intercessor with another man on whom he has no claim, with what idea can any one grasp the post of intercession with God for the people, who does not know himself to be in favour with Him through the merit of his own life? And how can he ask of Him pardon for others while ignorant whether towards himself He is appeased? And in this matter there is yet another thing to be more anxiously feared; namely, lest one who is supposed to be competent to appease wrath should himself provoke it on account of guilt of his own. For we all

know well that, when one who is in disfavour is sent to intercede with an incensed person, the mind of the latter is provoked to greater severity. Wherefore let one who is still tied and bound with earthly desires beware lest by more grievously incensing the strict judge, while he delights himself in his place of honour, he become the cause of ruin to his subordinates.

Chapter 11

What manner of man ought not to come to rule.

Wherefore let every one measure himself wisely, lest he venture to assume a place of rule, while in himself vice still reigns unto condemnation; lest one whom his own guilt depraves desire to become an intercessor for the faults of others. For on this account it is said to Moses by the supernal voice, *Speak unto Aaron; Whosoever he be of your seed throughout their generations that has a blemish, he shall not offer loaves of bread to the Lord his God* Leviticus 21:17. And it is also immediately subjoined; *If he be blind, if he be lame, if he have either a small or a large and crooked nose, if he be brokenfooted or brokenhanded, if he be hunchbacked, if he be bleareyed (lippus), if he have a white speck (albuginem) in his eye, if chronic scabies, if impetigo in his body, or if he be ruptured (ponderosus)* Leviticus 21:18. For that man is indeed blind who is unacquainted with the light of supernal contemplation, who, whelmed in the darkness of the present life, while he beholds not at all by loving it the light to come, knows not whither he is advancing the steps of his conduct. Hence by Hannah prophesying it is said, *He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness* 1 Kings 2:9. But that man is lame who does indeed see in what direction he ought to go, but, through infirmity of purpose, is unable to keep perfectly the way of life which he sees, because, while unstable habit rises not to a settled state of virtue, the steps of conduct do not follow with effect the aim of desire. Hence it is that Paul says, *Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed* Hebrews 12:12-13. But one with a small nose is he who is not adapted for keeping the measure of discernment. For with the nose we discern sweet odours and stenches: and so by the nose is properly expressed discernment, through which we choose virtues and eschew sins. Whence also it is said in praise of the bride, *Your nose is as the tower which is in Lebanon* Canticles 7:4; because, to wit, Holy Church, by discernment, espies assaults issuing from this or that quarter, and detects from an

eminence the coming wars of vices. But there are some who, not liking to be thought dull, busy themselves often more than needs in various investigations, and by reason of too great subtlety are deceived. Wherefore this also is added, *Or have a large and crooked nose*. For a large and crooked nose is excessive subtlety of discernment, which, having become unduly excrescent, itself confuses the correctness of its own operation. But one with broken foot or hand is he who cannot walk in the way of God at all, and is utterly without part or lot in good deeds, to such degree that he does not, like the lame man, maintain them however weakly, but remains altogether apart from them. But the hunchbacked is he whom the weight of earthly care bows down, so that he never looks up to the things that are above, but is intent only on what is trodden on among the lowest. And he, should he ever hear anything of the good things of the heavenly country, is so pressed down by the weight of perverse custom, that he lifts not the face of his heart to it, being unable to erect the posture of his thought, which the habit of earthly care keeps downward bent. Of this kind of men the Psalmist says, *I am bent down and am brought low continually* Psalm 38:8. The fault of such as these the Truth in person reprobates, saying, *But the seed which fell among thorns are they which, when they have heard the word, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of life, and bear no fruit* Luke 8:14. But the blear-eyed is he whose native wit flashes out for cognition of the truth, and yet carnal works obscure it. For in the blear-eyed the pupils are sound; but the eyelids, weakened by defluxion of humours, become gross; and even the brightness of the pupils is impaired, because they are worn continually by the flux upon them. The blear-eyed, then, is one whose sense nature has made keen, but whom a depraved habit of life confuses. To him it is well said through the angel, *Anoint your eyes with eyesalve that you may see* Revelation 3:18. For we may be said to anoint our eyes with eyesalve that we may see, when we aid the eye of our understanding for perceiving the clearness of the true light with the medicament of good conduct. But that man has a white speck in his eye who is not permitted to see the light of truth, in that he is blinded by the arrogant assumption of wisdom or of righteousness. For the pupil of the eye, when black, sees; but, when it bears a white speck, sees nothing; by which we may understand that the perceiving sense of human thought, if a man understands himself to be a fool and a

sinner, becomes cognizant of the clearness of inmost light; but, if it attributes to itself the whiteness of righteousness or wisdom, it excludes itself from the light of knowledge from above, and by so much the more fails entirely to penetrate the clearness of the true light, as it exalts itself within itself through arrogance; as of some it is said, *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools* Romans 1:22. But that man has chronic *scabies* whom the wantonness of the flesh without cease overmasters. For in *scabies* the violent heat of the bowels is drawn to the skin; whereby lechery is rightly designated, since, if the heart's temptation shoots forth into action, it may be truly said that violent internal heat breaks out into *scabies* of the skin: and it now wounds the body outwardly, because, while sensuality is not repressed in thought, it gains the mastery also in action. For Paul had a care to cleanse away this itch of the skin, when he said, *Let no temptation take you but such as is human* 1 Corinthians 10:13; as if to say plainly, It is human to suffer temptation in the heart; but it is devilish, in the struggle of temptation, to be also overcome in action. He also has impetigo in his body whosoever is ravaged in the mind by avarice; which, if not restrained in small things, does indeed dilate itself without measure.

For, as *impetigo* invades the body without pain, and, spreading with no annoyance to him whom it invades, disfigures the comeliness of the members, so avarice, too, exulcerates, while it pleases, the mind of one who is captive to it. As it offers to the thought one thing after another to be gained, it kindles the fire of enmities, and gives no pain with the wounds it causes, because it promises to the fevered mind abundance out of sin. But the comeliness of the members is destroyed, because the beauty of other virtues is also hereby marred: and it exulcerates as it were the whole body, in that it corrupts the mind with vices of all kinds; as Paul attests, saying, *The love of money is the root of all evils* 1 Timothy 6:10. But the ruptured one is he who does not carry turpitude into action, but yet is immoderately weighed down by it in mind through continual cogitation; one who is indeed by no means carried away to the extent of nefarious conduct; but his mind still delights itself without prick of repugnance in the pleasure of lechery. For the disease of rupture is when *humor viscerum ad virilia labitur, quæ profecto cum molestia dedecoris intumescunt* He, then, may be said to be ruptured who, letting all his

thoughts flow down to lasciviousness, bears in his heart a weight of turpitude; and, though not actually doing deeds of shame, nevertheless in mind is not withdrawn from them. Nor has he power to rise to the practice of good living before the eyes of men, because, hidden within him, the shameful weight presses him down. Whosoever, therefore, is subjected to any one of these diseases is forbidden to offer loaves of bread to the Lord, lest in truth he should be of no avail for expiating the sins of others, being one who is still ravaged by his own.

And now, having briefly shown after what manner one who is worthy should come to pastoral authority, and after what manner one who is unworthy should be greatly afraid, let us now demonstrate after what manner one who has attained to it worthily should live in it.

Pastoral Rule (Book II)

Of the Life of the Pastor.

Chapter 1

How one who has in due order arrived at a place of rule ought to demean himself in it.

The conduct of a prelate ought so far to transcend the conduct of the people as the life of a shepherd is wont to exalt him above the flock. For one whose estimation is such that the people are called his flock is bound anxiously to consider what great necessity is laid upon him to maintain rectitude. It is necessary, then, that in thought he should be pure, in action chief; discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech; a near neighbour to every one in sympathy, exalted above all in contemplation; a familiar friend of good livers through humility, unbending against the vices of evil-doers through zeal for righteousness; not relaxing in his care for what is inward from being occupied in outward things, nor neglecting to provide for outward things in his solicitude for what is inward. But the things which we have thus briefly touched on let us now unfold and discuss more at length.

Chapter 2

That the ruler should be pure in thought.

The ruler should always be pure in thought, inasmuch as no impurity ought to pollute him who has undertaken the office of wiping away the stains of pollution in the hearts of others also; for the hand that would cleanse from dirt must needs be clean, lest, being itself sordid with clinging mire, it soil whatever it touches all the more. For on this account it is said through the prophet, *Be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord* Isaiah 52:11. For they bear the vessels of the Lord who undertake, on the surety of their own conversation, to conduct the souls of their neighbours to the eternal sanctuary. Let them therefore perceive within themselves how purified they ought to be who carry in the bosom of their own personal responsibility living vessels to the temple of eternity. Hence by the divine voice it is enjoined Exodus 28:15, that on the breast of Aaron the breastplate of judgment should be closely pressed by binding fillets; seeing that lax cogitations should by no means possess the priestly heart, but reason alone constrain it; nor should he cogitate anything indiscreet or unprofitable, who, constituted as he is for example to others, ought to show in the gravity of his life what store of reason he carries in his breast. And on this breastplate it is further carefully prescribed that the names of the twelve patriarchs should be engraved. For to carry always the fathers registered on the breast is to think without intermission on the lives of the ancients. For the priest then walks blamelessly when he pores continually on the examples of the fathers that went before him, when he considers without cease the footsteps of the Saints, and keeps down unlawful thoughts, lest he advance the foot of his conduct beyond the limit of order. And it is also well called the breastplate of judgment, because the ruler ought ever with subtle scrutiny to discern between good and evil, and studiously consider what things are suitable for what, and when and how; nor should he seek anything for himself, but esteem his neighbours' good as his own advantage. Hence in the same place it is written, *But you shall put in the breastplate of Aaron doctrine and truth , which shall be upon Aaron's breast, when he goes in before the Lord, and he shall*

bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his breast in the sight of the Lord continually Exodus 18:30. For the priest's bearing the judgment of the children of Israel on his breast before the face of the Lord means his examining the causes of his subjects with regard only to the mind of the judge within, so that no admixture of humanity cleave to him in what he dispenses as standing in God's stead, lest private vexation should exasperate the keenness of his censure. And while he shows himself zealous against the vices of others, let him get rid of his own lest either latent grudge vitiate the calmness of his judgment, or headlong anger disturb it. But when the terror of Him who presides over all things is considered (that is to say of the judge within), not without great fear may subjects be governed. And such fear indeed purges, while it humiliates, the mind of the ruler, guarding it against being either lifted up by presumption of spirit, or defiled by delight of the flesh, or obscured by importunity of dusty thought through lust for earthly things. These things, however, cannot but knock at the ruler's mind: but it is necessary to make haste to overcome them by resistance, lest the vice which tempts by suggestion should subdue by the softness of delight, and, this being tardily expelled from the mind, should slay with the sword of consent.

Chapter 3

That the ruler should be always chief in action.

The ruler should always be chief in action, that by his living he may point out the way of life to those that are put under him, and that the flock, which follows the voice and manners of the shepherd, may learn how to walk better through example than through words. For he who is required by the necessity of his position to speak the highest things is compelled by the same necessity to exhibit the highest things. For that voice more readily penetrates the hearer's heart, which the speaker's life commends, since what he commands by speaking he helps the doing of by showing. Hence it is said through the prophet, *Get you up into the high mountain, you that bringest good tidings to Sion* Isaiah 40:9: which means that he who is engaged in heavenly preaching should already have forsaken the low level of earthly works, and appear as standing on the summit of things, and by so much the more easily should draw those who are under him to better things as by the merit of his life he cries aloud from heights above. Hence under the divine law the priest receives the shoulder for sacrifice, and this the right one and separate Exodus 29:22; to signify that his action should be not only profitable, but even singular; and that he should not merely do what is right among bad men, but transcend even the well-doers among those that are under him in the virtue of his conduct, as he surpasses them in the dignity of his order. The breast also together with the shoulder is assigned to him for eating, that he may learn to immolate to the Giver of all that of himself which he is enjoined to take of the Sacrifice; that he may not only in his breast entertain right thoughts, but with the shoulder of work invite those who behold him to things on high; that he may covet no prosperity of the present life, and fear no adversity; that, having regard to the fear within him, he may despise the charm of the world, but considering the charm of inward sweetness, may despise its terrors. Wherefore by command of the supernal voice Exodus 29:5 the priest is braced on each shoulder with the robe of the ephod, that he may be always guarded against prosperity and adversity by the ornament of virtues; so that walking, as S. Paul says

2 Corinthians 6:7, *in the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left*, while he strives only after *those things which are before*, he may decline on neither side to low delight. Him let neither prosperity elate nor adversity perturb; let neither smooth things coax him to the surrender of his will, nor rough things press him down to despair; so that, while he humbles the bent of his mind to no passions, he may show with how great beauty of the ephod he is covered on each shoulder. Which ephod is also rightly ordered to be made of gold, blue, purple, twice dyed scarlet, and flue twined linen Exodus 28:8, that it may be shown by how great diversity of virtues the priest ought to be distinguished. Thus in the priest's robe before all things gold glitters, to show that he should shine forth principally in the understanding of wisdom. And with it blue, which is resplendent with aerial colour, is conjoined, to show that through all that he penetrates with his understanding he should rise above earthly favours to the love of celestial things; lest, while caught unawares by his own praises, he be emptied of his very understanding of the truth. With gold and blue, purple also is mingled: which means, that the priest's heart, while hoping for the high things which he preaches, should repress in itself even the suggestions of vice, and as it were in virtue of a royal power, rebut them, in that he has regard ever to the nobility of inward regeneration, and by his manners guards his right to the robe of the heavenly kingdom. For it is of this nobility of the spirit that it is said through Peter, *You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood* 1 Peter 2:9. With respect also to this power, whereby we subdue vices, we are fortified by the voice of John, who says, *As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God* John 1:12. This dignity of fortitude the Psalmist has in view when he says, *But with me greatly honoured have been Your friends, O God; greatly strengthened has been their principality* Psalm 138:17. For truly the mind of saints is exalted to princely eminence while outwardly they are seen to suffer abasement. But with gold, blue, and purple, twice died scarlet is conjoined, to show that all excellences of virtue should be adorned with charity in the eyes of the judge within; and that whatever glitters before men may be lighted up in sight of the hidden arbiter with the flame of inward love. And, further, this charity, since it consists in love at once of God and of our neighbour, has, as it were, the lustre of a double dye. He then who so pants after the beauty of his Maker as to neglect the care

of his neighbours, or so attends to the care of his neighbours as to grow languid in divine love, whichever of these two things it may be that he neglects, knows not what it is to have twice dyed scarlet in the adornment of his ephod. But, while the mind is intent on the precepts of charity, it undoubtedly remains that the flesh be macerated through abstinence. Hence with twice dyed scarlet fine twined linen is conjoined. For fine linen (*byssus*) springs from the earth with glittering show: and what is designated by fine linen but bodily chastity shining white in the comeliness of purity? And it is also twisted for being interwoven into the beauty of the ephod, since the habit of chastity then attains to the perfect whiteness of purity when the flesh is worn by abstinence. And, since the merit of affliction of the flesh profits among the other virtues, fine twined linen shows white, as it were, in the diverse beauty of the ephod.

Chapter 4

That the ruler should be discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech.

The ruler should be discreet in keeping silence, profitable in speech; lest he either utter what ought to be suppressed or suppress what he ought to utter. For, as incautious speaking leads into error, so indiscreet silence leaves in error those who might have been instructed. For often improvident rulers, fearing to lose human favour, shrink timidly from speaking freely the things that are right; and, according to the voice of the Truth John 10:12, serve unto the custody of the flock by no means with the zeal of shepherds, but in the way of hirelings; since they fly when the wolf comes if they hide themselves under silence. For hence it is that the Lord through the prophet upbraids them, saying, *Dumb dogs, that cannot bark* Isaiah 56:10. Hence again He complains, saying, *You have not gone up against the enemy, neither opposed a wall for the house of Israel, to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord* Ezekiel 13:5. Now to go up against the enemy is to go with free voice against the powers of this world for defence of the flock; and to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord is out of love of justice to resist bad men when they contend against us. For, for a shepherd to have feared to say what is right, what else is it but to have turned his back in keeping silence? But surely, if he puts himself in front for the flock, he opposes a wall against the enemy for the house of Israel. Hence again to the sinful people it is said, *Your prophets have seen false and foolish things for you: neither did they discover your iniquity, to provoke you to repentance* Lamentations 2:14. For in sacred language teachers are sometimes called prophets, in that, by pointing out how fleeting are present things, they make manifest the things that are to come. And such the divine discourse convinces of seeing false things, because, while fearing to reprove faults, they vainly flatter evil doers by promising security: neither do they at all discover the iniquity of sinners, since they refrain their voice from chiding. For the language of reproof is the key of discovery, because by chiding it discloses the fault of which even he who has committed it is often himself

unaware. Hence Paul says, *That he may be able by sound doctrine even to convince the gainsayers* Titus 1:9. Hence through Malachi it is said, *The priest's lips keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth* Malachi 2:7. Hence through Isaiah the Lord admonishes, saying, *Cry aloud, spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet* Isaiah 58:1. For it is true that whosoever enters on the priesthood undertakes the office of a herald, so as to walk, himself crying aloud, before the coming of the judge who follows terribly. Wherefore, if the priest knows not how to preach, what voice of a loud cry shall the mute herald utter? For hence it is that the Holy Spirit sat upon the first pastors under the appearance of tongues Acts 2:3; because whomsoever He has filled, He himself at once makes eloquent. Hence it is enjoined on Moses that when the priest goes into the tabernacle he shall be encompassed with bells Exodus 28:33; that is, that he shall have about him the sounds of preaching, lest he provoke by his silence the judgment of Him Who beholds him from above. For it is written, *That his sound may be heard when he goes in unto the holy place before the Lord and when he comes out, that he die not* Exodus 28:35. For the priest, when he goes in or comes out, dies if a sound is not heard from him, because he provokes the wrath of the hidden judge, if he goes without the sound of preaching. Aptly also are the bells described as inserted in his vestments. For what else ought we to take the vestments of the priest to be but righteous works; as the prophet attests when he says, *Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness* Psalm 131:9? The bells, therefore, are inherent in his vestments to signify that the very works of the priest should also proclaim the way of life together with the sound of his tongue. But, when the ruler prepares himself for speaking, let him bear in mind with what studious caution he ought to speak, lest, if he be hurried inordinately into speaking, the hearts of hearers be smitten with the wound of error and, while he perchance desires to seem wise he unwisely sever the bond of unity. For on this account the Truth says, *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another* Mark 9:49. Now by salt is denoted the word of wisdom. Let him, therefore, who strives to speak wisely fear greatly, lest by his eloquence the unity of his hearers be disturbed. Hence Paul says, *Not to be more wise than behooves to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety* Romans 12:3. Hence in the priest's vestment, according to Divine precept, to bells are added pomegranates Exodus 28:34. For

what is signified by pomegranates but the unity of the faith? For, as within a pomegranate many seeds are protected by one outer rind, so the unity of the faith comprehends the innumerable peoples of holy Church, whom a diversity of merits retains within her. Lest then a ruler should be unadvisedly hurried into speaking, the Truth in person proclaims to His disciples this which we have already cited, *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another* Mark 9:49. It is as though He should say in a figure through the dress of the priest: Join pomegranates to bells, that in all you say you may with cautious watchfulness keep the unity of the faith. Rulers ought also to guard with anxious thought not only against saying in any way what is wrong, but against uttering even what is right overmuch and inordinately; since the good effect of things spoken is often lost, when enfeebled to the hearts of hearers by the incautious importunity of loquacity; and this same loquacity, which knows not how to serve for the profit of the hearers, also defiles the speaker. Hence it is well said through Moses, *The man that has a flux of seed shall be unclean* Leviticus 15:2. For the quality of the speech that is heard is the seed of the thought which follows, since, while speech is conceived through the ear, thought is engendered in the mind. Whence also by the wise of this world the excellent preacher was called a sower of words (*seminiverbius*) Acts 17:18. Wherefore, he that suffers from a flux of seed is pronounced unclean, because, being addicted to much speaking, he defiles himself by that which, had it been orderly issued, might have produced the offspring of right thought in the hearts of hearers; and, while he incautiously spends himself in loquacity, he sheds his seed not so as to serve for generation, but unto uncleanness. Hence Paul also, in admonishing his disciple to be instant in preaching, when he says, *I charge you before God and Christ Jesus, Who shall judge the quick and the dead by His appearing and His kingdom, preach the word, be instant opportunely, importunely* 2 Timothy 4:1, being about to say *importunely*, premises *opportunely*, because in truth importunity mars itself to the mind of the hearer by its own very cheapness, if it knows not how to observe opportunity.

Chapter 5

That the ruler should be a near neighbour to every one in compassion, and exalted above all in contemplation.

The ruler should be a near neighbour to every one in sympathy, and exalted above all in contemplation, so that through the bowels of loving-kindness he may transfer the infirmities of others to himself, and by loftiness of speculation transcend even himself in his aspiration after the invisible; lest either in seeking high things he despise the weak things of his neighbours, or in suiting himself to the weak things of his neighbours he relinquish his aspiration after high things. For hence it is that Paul is caught up into Paradise 2 Corinthians 12:3 and explores the secrets of the third heaven, and, yet, though borne aloft in that contemplation of things invisible, recalls the vision of his mind to the bed of the carnal, and directs how they should have intercourse with each other in their hidden privacy, saying, *But on account of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife her due, and likewise the wife unto the husband* 1 Corinthians 7:2. And a little after 1 Corinthians 5:5, *Defraud not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer, and come together again, that Satan tempt you not*. Lo, he is already initiated into heavenly secrets, and yet through the bowels of condescension he searches into the bed of the carnal; and the same eye of the heart which in his elevation he lifts to the invisible, he bends in his compassion upon the secrets of those who are subject to infirmity. In contemplation he transcends heaven, and yet in his anxious care deserts not the couch of the carnal; because, being joined at once to the highest and to the lowest by the bond of charity, though in himself mightily caught up in the power of the spirit into the heights above, yet among others, in his loving-kindness, he is content to become weak. Hence, therefore, he says, *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Corinthians 11:29. Hence again he says, *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew* 1 Corinthians 9:20. Now he exhibited this behaviour not by losing hold of his faith, but by extending his loving-kindness; so as, by

transferring in a figure the person of unbelievers to himself, to learn from himself how they ought to have compassion shown them; to the end that he might bestow on them what he would have rightly wished to have had bestowed upon himself, had he been as they. Hence again he says, *Whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for you* 2 Corinthians 5:13. For he had known how both to transcend himself in contemplation, and to accommodate himself to his hearers in condescension. Hence Jacob, the Lord looking down from above, and oil being poured down on the stone, saw angels ascending and descending Genesis 28:12; to signify, that true preachers not only aspire in contemplation to the holy head of the Church, that is to the Lord, above, but also descend in commiseration downward to His members. Hence Moses goes frequently in and out of the tabernacle, and he who is wrapped into contemplation within is busied outside with the affairs of those who are subject to infirmity. Within he considers the secret things of God; without he carries the burdens of the carnal. And also concerning doubtful matters he always recurs to the tabernacle, to consult the Lord before the ark of the covenant; affording without doubt an example to rulers; that, when in the outside world they are uncertain how to order things, they should return to their own soul as though to the tabernacle, and, as before the ark of the covenant, consult the Lord, if so, they may search within themselves the pages of sacred utterance concerning that whereof they doubt. Hence the Truth itself, manifested to us through susception of our humanity, continues in prayer on the mountain, but works miracles in the cities Luke 6:12, thus laying down the way to be followed by good rulers; that, though already in contemplation aspiring to the highest things, they should mingle in sympathy with the necessities of the infirm; since charity then rises wonderfully to high things when it is compassionately drawn to the low things of neighbours; and the more kindly it descends to the weak things of this world, the more vigorously it recurs to the things on high. But those who are over others should show themselves to be such that their subjects may not blush to disclose even their secrets to them; that the little ones, vexed with the waves of temptation, may have recourse to their pastor's heart as to a mother's breast, and wash away the defilement they foresee to themselves from the filth of the sin that buffets them in the solace of his exhortation and in the tears of prayer. Hence also it is

that before the doors of the temple the brazen sea for washing the hands of those who enter, that is the laver, is supported by twelve oxen 1 Kings 7:23, *seq*, whose faces indeed stand out to view, but whose hinder parts are hidden. For what is signified by the twelve oxen but the whole order of pastors, of whom the law says, as explained by Paul, *You shall not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treads out the grain* (1 Corinthians 9:9; ex Deuteronomy 25:4)? Their open works indeed we see; but what remains to them behind in the hidden retribution of the strict judge we know not. Yet, when they prepare the patience of their condescension for cleansing the sins of their neighbours in confession, they support, as it were, the laver before the doors of the temple; that whosoever is striving to enter the gate of eternity may show his temptations to his pastor's heart, and, as it were, wash the hands of his thought and of his deed in the laver of the oxen. And for the most part it comes to pass that, while the ruler's mind becomes aware, through condescension, of the trials of others, it is itself also attacked by the temptations whereof it hears; since the same water of the laver in which a multitude of people is cleansed is undoubtedly itself defiled. For, in receiving the pollutions of those who wash, it loses, as it were, the calmness of its own purity. But of this the pastor ought by no means to be afraid, since, under God, who nicely balances all things, he is the more easily rescued from his own temptations as he is more compassionately distressed by those of others.

Chapter 6

That the ruler should be, through humility, a companion of good livers, but, through the zeal of righteousness, rigid against the vices of evildoers.

The ruler should be, through humility, a companion of good livers, and, through the zeal of righteousness, rigid against the vices of evildoers; so that in nothing he prefer himself to the good, and yet, when the fault of the bad requires it, he be at once conscious of the power of his priority; to the end that, while among his subordinates who live well he waives his rank and accounts them as his equals, he may not fear to execute the laws of rectitude towards the perverse. For, as I remember to have said in my book on morals (*Lib.* xxi., *Moral, cap.* 10, *nunc. n.* 22), it is clear that nature produced all men equal; but, through variation in the order of their merits, guilt puts some below others. But the very diversity which has accrued from vice is ordered by divine judgment, so that, since all men cannot stand on an equal footing, one should be ruled by another. Hence all who are over others ought to consider in themselves not the authority of their rank, but the equality of their condition and rejoice not to be over men, but to do them good. For indeed our ancient fathers are said to have been not kings of men, but shepherds of flocks. And, when the Lord said to Noe and his children, *Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth* Genesis 9:1, He at once added, *And let the fear of you and the dread of you be upon all the beasts of the earth*. Thus it appears that, whereas it is ordered that the fear and the dread should be upon the beasts of the earth, it is forbidden that it should be upon men. For man is by nature preferred to the brute beasts, but not to other men; and therefore it is said to him that he should be feared by the beasts, but not by men; since to wish to be feared by one's equal is to be proud against nature. And yet it is necessary that rulers should be feared by their subjects, when they find that God is not feared by them; so that those who have no dread of divine judgments may at any rate, through human dread, be afraid to sin. For superiors by no means show themselves proud in seeking to inspire this fear, in which they seek not their own glory, but the righteousness of their

subordinates. For in exacting fear of themselves from such as live perversely, they lord it, as it were, not over men, but over beasts, inasmuch as, so far as their subordinates are bestial, they ought also to lie subdued to dread.

But commonly a ruler, from the very fact of his being pre-eminent over others, is puffed up with elation of thought; and, while all things serve his need, while his commands are quickly executed after his desire, while all his subjects extol with praises what he has done well, but have no authority to speak against what he has done amiss, and while they commonly praise even what they ought to have reproved, his mind, seduced by what is offered in abundance from below, is lifted up above itself; and, while outwardly surrounded by unbounded favour, he loses his inward sense of truth; and, forgetful of himself, he scatters himself on the voices of other men, and believes himself to be such as outwardly he hears himself called rather than such as he ought inwardly to have judged himself to be. He looks down on those who are under him, nor does he acknowledge them as in the order of nature his equals; and those whom he has surpassed in the accident of power he believes himself to have transcended also in the merits of his life; he esteems himself wiser than all whom he sees himself to excel in power. For indeed he establishes himself in his own mind on a certain lofty eminence, and, though bound together in the same condition of nature with others, he disdains to regard others from the same level; and so he comes to be even like him of whom it is written, *He beholds all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride* Job 41:25. Nay, aspiring to a singular eminence, and despising the social life of the angels, he says, *I will place my seat in the north, and I will be like the Most High* Isaiah 14:13. Wherefore through a marvellous judgment he finds a pit of downfall within himself, while outwardly he exalts himself on the summit of power. For he is indeed made like the apostate angel, when, being a man, he disdains to be like men. Thus Saul, after merit of humility, became swollen with pride, when in the height of power: for his humility he was preferred, for his pride rejected; as the Lord attests, Who says, *When you were little in your own sight, did I not make you the head of the tribes of Israel* 1 Samuel 15:17? He had before seen himself little in his own eyes, but, when propped up by temporal power, he no longer saw himself little. For, preferring himself in

comparison with others because he had more power than all, he esteemed himself great above all. Yet in a wonderful way, when he was little with himself, he was great with God; but, when he appeared great with himself, he was little with God . Thus commonly, while the mind is inflated from an affluence of subordinates, it becomes corrupted to a flux of pride, the very summit of power being pander to desire. And in truth he orders this power well who knows how both to maintain it and to combat it. He orders it well who knows how through it to tower above delinquencies, and knows how with it to match himself with others in equality. For the human mind commonly is exalted even when supported by no authority: how much more does it lift itself on high when authority lends itself to its support! Nevertheless he dispenses this authority aright, who knows how, with anxious care, both to take of it what is helpful, and also to reject what tempts, and with it to perceive himself to be on a par with others, and yet to put himself above those that sin in his avenging zeal.

But we shall more fully understand this distinction, if we look at the examples given by the first pastor. For Peter, who had received from God the principality of Holy Church, from Cornelius, acting well and prostrating himself humbly before him, refused to accept immoderate veneration, saying, *Stand up; do it not; I myself also am a man* Acts 10:26. But, when he discovers the guilt of Ananias and Sapphira, he soon shows with how great power he had been made eminent above all others. For by his word he smote their life, which he detected by the penetration of his spirit; and he recollected himself as chief within the Church against sins, though he did not acknowledge this, when honour was eagerly paid him, before his brethren who acted well. In one case holiness of conduct merited the communion of equality; in the other avenging zeal brought out to view the just claims of authority. Paul, too, knew not himself as preferred above his brethren who acted well, when he said, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy* 2 Corinthians 1:23. And he straightway added, *For by faith you stand:* as if to explain his declaration by saying, For this cause we have not dominion over your faith, because by faith you stand; for we are your equals in that wherein we know you to stand. He knew not himself as preferred above his brethren, when he said, *We became babes in the*

midst of you 1 Thessalonians 2:7; and again, *But ourselves your servants through Christ* 2 Corinthians 4:5. But, when he found a fault that required to be corrected, straightway he recollected himself as a master, saying, *What will you? Shall I come unto you with a rod* 1 Corinthians 4:21?

Supreme rule, then, is ordered well, when he who presides lords it over vices, rather than over his brethren. But, when superiors correct their delinquent subordinates, it remains for them anxiously to take heed how far, while in right of their authority they smite faults with due discipline, they still, through custody of humility, acknowledge themselves to be on a par with the very brethren who are corrected; although for the most part it is becoming that in our silent thought we even prefer the brethren whom we correct to ourselves. For their vices are through us smitten with the vigour of discipline; but in those which we ourselves commit we are lacerated by not even a word of upbraiding. Wherefore we are by so much the more bounden before the Lord as among men we sin unpunished: but our discipline renders our subordinates by so much the freer from divine judgment, as it leaves not their faults without retribution here. Therefore, in the heart humility should be maintained, and in action discipline. And all the time there is need of sagacious insight, lest, through excessive custody of the virtue of humility, the just claims of government be relaxed, and lest, while any superior lowers himself more than is fit, he be unable to restrain the lives of his subordinates under the bond of discipline. Let rulers, then, maintain outwardly what they undertake for the benefit of others: let them retain inwardly what makes them fearful in their estimate of themselves. But still let even their subjects perceive, by certain signs coming out becomingly, that in themselves they are humble; so as both to see something to be afraid of in their authority, and to acknowledge something to imitate with respect to humility. Therefore let those who preside study without intermission that in proportion as their power is seen to be great externally it be kept down within themselves internally; that it vanquish not their thought; that the heart be not carried away to delight in it; lest the mind become unable to control that which in lust of domination it submits itself to. For, lest the heart of a ruler should be betrayed into elation by delight in personal power, it is rightly said by a certain wise man *They have made you a leader: lift*

not up yourself, but be among them as one of them Sirach 32:1. Hence also Peter says, *Not as being lords over God's heritage, but being made ensamples to the flock* 1 Peter 5:3. Hence the Truth in person, provoking us to higher virtuous desert, says, *You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are greater exercise authority upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be greater among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; even as the San of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister* Matthew 20:25. Hence also He indicates what punishments are in store for the servant who has been elated by his assumption of government, saying, *But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delays his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looks not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites* Matthew 24:48, *seq.*. For he is rightly numbered among the hypocrites, who under pretence of discipline turns the ministry of government to the purpose of domination. And yet sometimes there is more grievous delinquency, if among perverse persons equality is kept up more than discipline. For Eli, because, overcome by false affection, he would not punish his delinquent sons, smote himself along with his sons before the strict judge with a cruel doom 1 Samuel 4:17-18. For on this account it is said to him by the divine voice, *You have honoured your sons more than Me* 1 Samuel 2:29. Hence, too, He upbraids the shepherds through the prophet, saying, *That which was broken you have not bound up, and that which was cast away you have not brought back* Ezekiel 34:4. For one who had been cast away is brought back, when any one who has fallen into sin is recalled to a state of righteousness by the vigour of pastoral solicitude. For ligature binds a fracture when discipline subdues a sin, lest the wound should bleed mortally for want of being compressed by the severity of constraint. But often a fracture is made worse, when it is bound together unwarily, so that the cut is more severely felt from being immoderately constrained by ligaments. Hence it is needful that when a wound of sin in subordinates is repressed by correction, even constraint should moderate itself with great carefulness, to the end that it may so exercise the rights of discipline against delinquents as to retain the

bowels of loving-kindness. For care should be taken that a ruler show himself to his subjects as a mother in loving-kindness, and as a father in discipline. And all the time it should be seen to with anxious circumspection, that neither discipline be rigid nor loving-kindness lax. For, as we have before now said in our book on Morals (*Lib.* xx., *Moral* n. 14, c. 8, *et ep.* 25, *lib.* 1), there is much wanting both to discipline and to compassion, if one be had without the other. But there ought to be in rulers towards their subjects both compassion justly considerate, and discipline affectionately severe. For hence it is that, as the Truth teaches Luke 10:34, the man is brought by the care of the Samaritan half dead into the inn, and both wine and oil are applied to his wounds; the wine to make them smart, the oil to soothe them. For whosoever superintends the healing of wounds must needs administer in wine the smart of pain, and in oil the softness of loving-kindness, to the end that through wine what is festering may be purged, and through oil what is curable may be soothed. Gentleness, then, is to be mingled with severity; a sort of compound is to be made of both; so that subjects be neither exulcerated by too much asperity, nor relaxed by too great kindness. Which thing, according to the words of Paul Hebrews 9:4, is well signified by that ark of the tabernacle, in which, together with the tables, there as a rod and manna; because, if with knowledge of sacred Scripture in the good ruler's breast there is the rod of constraint, there should be also the manna of sweetness. Hence David says, *Your rod and your staff, they have comforted me* Psalm 23:4. For with a rod we are smitten, with a staff we are supported. If, then, there is the constraint of the rod for striking, there should be also the comfort of the staff for supporting. Wherefore let there be love, but not enervating; let there be vigour, but not exasperating; let there be zeal, but not immoderately burning; let there be pity; but not sparing more than is expedient; that, while justice and mercy blend themselves together in supreme rule, he who is at the head may both soothe the hearts of his subjects in making them afraid, and yet in soothing them constrain them to reverential awe.

Chapter 7

That the ruler relax not his care for the things that are within in his occupation among the things that are without, nor neglect to provide for the things that are without in his solicitude for the things that are within.

The ruler should not relax his care for the things that are within in his occupation among the things that are without, nor neglect to provide for the things that are without in his solicitude for the things that are within; lest either, given up to the things that are without, he fall away from his inmost concerns, or, occupied only with the things that are within bestow not on his neighbours outside himself what he owes them. For it is often the case that some, as if forgetting that they have been put over their brethren for their souls' sake, devote themselves with the whole effort of their heart to secular concerns; these, when they are at hand, they exult in transacting, and, even when there is a lack of them, pant after them night and day with seethings of turbid thought; and when, haply for lack of opportunity, they have quiet from them, by their very quiet they are wearied all the more. For they count it pleasure to be tired by action: they esteem it labour not to labour in earthly businesses. And so it comes to pass that, while they delight in being hustled by worldly tumults, they are ignorant of the things that are within, which they ought to have taught to others. And from this cause undoubtedly, the life also of their subjects is benumbed; because, while desirous of advancing spiritually, it meets a stumbling-block on the way in the example of him who is set over it. For when the head languishes, the members fail to thrive; and it is in vain for an army to follow swiftly in pursuit of enemies if the very leader of the march goes wrong. No exhortation sustains the minds of the subjects, and no reproof chastises their faults, because, while the office of an earthly judge is executed by the guardian of souls, the attention of the shepherd is diverted from custody of the flock; and the subjects are unable to apprehend the light of truth, because, while earthly pursuits occupy the pastor's mind, dust, driven by the wind of temptation, blinds the Church's eyes. To guard against this, the Redeemer of the human

race, when He would restrain us from gluttony, saying, *Take heed to yourselves that your hearts be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness* Luke 21:34, immediately added, *Or with cares of this life:* and in the same place also, with design to add fearfulness to the warning, He straightway said, *Lest perchance that day come upon you unawares* Luke 21:34: and He even declares the manner of that coming, saying, *For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth* Luke 21:35. Hence He says again, *No man can serve two masters* Luke 16:13. Hence Paul withdraws the minds of the religious from consort with the world by summoning, nay rather enlisting them, when he says, *No man that wars for God entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him to whom he has approved himself* 2 Timothy 2:4. Hence to the rulers of the Church he both commends the studies of leisure and points out the remedies of counsel, saying, *If then you should have secular judgments, set them to judge who are contemptible in the church* 1 Corinthians 6:4; that is, that those very persons whom no spiritual gifts adorn should devote themselves to earthly charges. It is as if he had said more plainly, Since they are incapable of penetrating the inmost things, let them at any rate employ themselves externally in necessary things. Hence Moses, who speaks with God Exodus 18:17-18, is judged by the reproof of Jethro, who was of alien race, because with ill-advised labour he devotes himself to the people's earthly affairs: and counsel too is presently given him, that he should appoint others in his stead for settling earthly strifes, and he himself should be more free to learn spiritual secrets for the instruction of the people.

By the subjects, then, inferior matters are to be transacted, by the rulers the highest thought of; so that no annoyance of dust may darken the eye which is placed aloft for looking forward to the onward steps. For all who preside are the head of their subjects; and, that the feet may be able to take a straight course, the head ought undoubtedly to look forward to it from above, lest the feet linger on their onward journey, the body being bent from its uprightness and the head bowed down to the earth. But with what conscience can the overseer of souls avail himself among other men of his pastoral dignity, while engaged himself in the earthly cares which it was his duty to reprehend in others? And this indeed is what the Lord, in the

wrath of just retribution, menaced through the prophet, saying, *And there shall be like people, like priest* Hosea 4:9. For the priest is as the people, when one who bears a spiritual office acts as do others who are still under judgment with regard to their carnal pursuits. And this indeed the prophet Jeremiah, in the great sorrow of his charity, deplores under the image of the destruction of the temple, saying, *How is the gold become dim! The most excellent colour is changed; the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of all the streets* Lamentations 4:1. For what is expressed by gold, which surpasses all other metals, but the excellency of holiness? What by the most excellent colour but the reverence that is about religion, to all men lovely? What are signified by the stones of the sanctuary but persons in sacred orders? What is figured under the name of streets but the latitude of this present life? For, because in Greek speech the word for latitude is πλάτος, streets (*plateæ*) have been so called from their breadth, or latitude. But the Truth in person says, *Broad and spacious is the way that leads to destruction* Matthew 7:13. Gold, therefore, becomes dim when a life of holiness is polluted by earthly doings; the most excellent colour is changed, when the previous reputation of persons who were believed to be living religiously is diminished. For, when any one after a habit of holiness mixes himself up with earthly doings, it is as though his colour were changed, and the reverence that surrounded him grew pale and disregarded before the eyes of men. The stones of the sanctuary also are poured out into the streets, when those who, for the ornament of the Church, should have been free to penetrate internal mysteries as it were in the secret places of the tabernacle seek out the broadways of secular causes outside. For indeed to this end they were made stones of the sanctuary, that they might appear in the vestment of the high-priest within the holy of holies. But when ministers of religion exact not the Redeemer's honour from those that are under them by the merit of their life, they are not stones of the sanctuary in the ornament of the pontiff. And truly these stones of the sanctuary lie scattered through the streets, when persons in sacred orders, given up to the latitude of their own pleasures, cleave to earthly businesses. And it is to be observed that they are said to be scattered, not in the streets, but in the top of the streets; because, even when they are engaged in earthly matters, they desire to appear topmost; so as to

occupy the broad ways in their enjoyment of delight, and yet to be at the top of the streets in the dignity of holiness.

Further, there is nothing to hinder us from taking the stones of the sanctuary to be those of which the sanctuary was itself constructed; which lie scattered in the top of the streets when men in sacred orders, in whose office the glory of holiness had previously seemed to stand, devote themselves out of preference to earthly doings. Secular employments, therefore, though they may sometimes be endured out of compassion, should never be sought after out of affection for the things themselves; lest, while they weigh down the mind of him who loves them, they sink it, overcome by its own burden, from heavenly places to the lowest. But, on the other hand, there are some who undertake the care of the flock, but desire to be so at leisure for their own spiritual concerns as to be in no wise occupied with external things. Such persons, in neglecting all care for what pertains to the body, by no means meet the needs of those who are put under them. And certainly their preaching is for the most part despised; because, while they find fault with the deeds of sinners, but nevertheless afford them not the necessaries of the present life, they are not at all willingly listened to. For the word of doctrine penetrates not the mind of one that is in need, if the hand of compassion commends it not to his heart. But the seed of the word readily germinates, when the loving-kindness of the preacher waters it in the hearer's breast. Whence, for a ruler to be able to infuse what may profit inwardly, it is necessary for him, with blameless consideration, to provide also for outward things. Let pastors, then, so glow with ardour in regard to the inward affections of those they have the charge of as not to relinquish provision also for their outward life. For, as we have said, the heart of the flock is, even as it were of right, set against preaching, if the care of external succour be neglected by the pastor. Whence also the first pastor anxiously admonishes, saying, *The elders which are among you I beseech, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed, feed the flock of God which is among you* 1 Peter 5:1: in which place he showed whether it was the feeding of the heart or of the body that he was commending, when he immediately added, *Providing for it, not by constraint, but willingly, according to God, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind*. In these words,

indeed, pastors are kindly forewarned, lest, while they satisfy the want of those who are under them, they slay themselves with the sword of ambition; lest, while through them their neighbours are refreshed with succours of the flesh, they themselves remain fasting from the bread of righteousness. This solicitude of pastors Paul stirs up when he says, *If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel* 1 Timothy 5:8. In the midst of all this, then, they should fear, and watchfully take heed, lest, while occupied with outward care, they be whelmed away from inward intentness. For usually, as we have already said, the hearts of rulers, while unwarily devoting themselves to temporal solicitude, cool in inmost love; and, being carried here and there abroad, fear not to forget that they have undertaken the government of souls. It is necessary, then, that the solicitude expended on those who are put under us should be kept within a certain measure. Hence it is well said to Ezekiel, *The priests shall not shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long, but polling let them poll their heads* Ezekiel 44:20. For they are rightly called priests who are set over the faithful for affording them sacred guidance. But the hairs outside the head are thoughts in the mind; which, as they spring up insensibly above the brain, denote the cares of the present life, which, owing to negligent perception, since they sometimes come forth unseasonably, advance, as it were, without our feeling them. Since, then, all who are over others ought indeed to have external anxieties, and yet should not be vehemently bent upon them, the priests are rightly forbidden either to shave their heads or to let their hair grow long; that so they may neither cut off from themselves entirely thoughts of the flesh for the life of those who are under them, nor again allow them to grow too much. Thus in this passage it is well said, *Polling let them poll their heads;* to wit, that the cares of temporal anxiety should both extend themselves as far as need requires, and yet be cut short soon, lest they grow to an immoderate extent. When, therefore, through provident care for bodies applied externally life is protected [or, through provident care applied externally the life of bodies is protected], and again, through moderate intentness of heart, is not impeded , the hairs on the priest's head are both preserved to cover the skin, and cut short so as not to veil the eyes.

Chapter 8

That the ruler should not set his heart on pleasing men, and yet should give heed to what ought to please them.

Meanwhile it is also necessary for the ruler to keep wary watch, lest the lust of pleasing men assail him; lest, when he studiously penetrates the things that are within, and providently supplies the things that are without, he seek to be beloved of those that are under him more than truth; lest, while, supported by his good deeds, he seems not to belong to the world, self-love estrange him from his Maker. For he is the Redeemer's enemy who through the good works which he does covets being loved by the Church instead of Him; since a servant whom the bridegroom has sent with gifts to the bride is guilty of treacherous thought if he desires to please the eyes of the bride. And in truth this self-love, when it has got possession of a ruler's mind, sometimes carries it away inordinately to softness, but sometimes to roughness. For from love of himself the ruler's mind is inclined to softness, because, when he observes those that are under him sinning, he does not presume to reprove them, lest their affection for himself should grow dull; nay sometimes he smooths down with flatteries the offense of his subordinates which he ought to have rebuked. Hence it is well said through the prophet, *Woe unto them that sew cushions under every elbow, and make pillows under the head of every stature to catch souls* Ezekiel 13:18; inasmuch as to put cushions under every elbow is to cherish with bland flatteries souls that are falling from their uprightness and reclining themselves in this world's enjoyment. For it is as though the elbow of a recumbent person rested on a cushion and his head on pillows, when the hardness of reproof is withdrawn from one who sins, and when the softness of favour is offered to him, that he may lie softly in error, while no roughness of contradiction troubles him. But so rulers who love themselves undoubtedly show themselves to those by whom they fear they may be injured in their pursuit of temporal glory. Such indeed as they see to have no power against them they ever keep down with roughness of rigid censure, never admonish them gently, but, forgetful of pastoral kindness, terrify them with the rights of

domination. Such the divine voice rightly upbraids through the prophet, saying, *But with austerity and power did you rule them* Ezekiel 24:4. For, loving themselves more than their Maker, they lift up themselves haughtily towards those that are under them, considering not what they ought to do, but what they can do; they have no fear of future judgment; they glory insolently in temporal power; it pleases them to be free to do even unlawful things, and that no one among their subordinates should contradict them. He, then, who sets his mind on doing wrong things, and yet wishes all other men to hold their peace about them, is himself a witness to himself that he desires to be loved himself more than the truth, which he is unwilling should be defended against him. There is indeed no one who so lives as not to some extent to fail in duty. He, then, desires the truth to be loved more fully than himself, who wishes to be spared by no one against the truth. For hence Peter willingly accepted Paul's rebuke Galatians 2:11; hence David humbly listened to the reproof of his subject 2 Samuel 12:7; because good rulers, being themselves unconscious of loving with partial affection, believe the word of free sincerity from subjects to be the homage of humility. But meanwhile it is necessary that the care of government be tempered with so great skill of management that the mind of subjects, when it has become able to feel rightly on some subjects, should so advance to liberty of speech that liberty still break not out into pride; lest, while liberty of the tongue is perchance conceded to them overmuch, the humility of their life be lost. It is to be borne in mind also, that it is right for good rulers to desire to please men; but this in order to draw their neighbours by the sweetness of their own character to affection for the truth; not that they should long to be themselves loved, but should make affection for themselves as a sort of road by which to lead the hearts of their hearers to the love of the Creator. For it is indeed difficult for a preacher who is not loved, however well he may preach, to be willingly listened to. He, then, who is over others ought to study to be loved to the end that he may be listened to, and still not seek love for its own sake, lest he be found in the hidden usurpation of his thought to rebel against Him whom in his office he appears to serve. Which thing Paul insinuates well, when, manifesting the secret of his affection for us, he says, *Even as I please all men in all things* 1 Corinthians 10:33. And yet he says again, *If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ* Galatians 1:10. Thus Paul pleases, and

pleases not; because in that he desires to please he seeks that not he himself should please men, but truth through him.

Chapter 9

That the ruler ought to be careful to understand how commonly vices pass themselves off as virtues.

The ruler also ought to understand how commonly vices pass themselves off as virtues. For often niggardliness palliates itself under the name of frugality, and on the other hand prodigality hides itself under the appellation of liberality. Often inordinate laxity is believed to be loving-kindness, and unbridled wrath is accounted the virtue of spiritual zeal. Often precipitate action is taken for the efficacy of promptness, and tardiness for the deliberation of seriousness. Whence it is necessary for the ruler of souls to distinguish with vigilant care between virtues and vices, lest either niggardliness get possession of his heart while he exults in seeming frugal in expenditure; or, while anything is prodigally wasted, he glory in being as it were compassionately liberal; or in remitting what he ought to have smitten he draw on those that are under him to eternal punishment; or in mercilessly smiting an offense he himself offend more grievously; or by immaturely anticipating mar what might have been done properly and gravely; or by putting off the merit of a good action change it to something worse.

Chapter 10

What the ruler's discrimination should be between correction and connivance, between fervour and gentleness.

It should be known too that the vices of subjects ought sometimes to be prudently connived at, but indicated in that they are connived at; that things, even though openly known, ought sometimes to be seasonably tolerated, but sometimes, though hidden, be closely investigated; that they ought sometimes to be gently reproved, but sometimes vehemently censured. For, indeed, some things, as we have said, ought to be prudently connived at, but indicated in that they are connived at, so that, when the delinquent is aware that he is discovered and borne with, he may blush to augment those faults which he considers in himself are tolerated in silence, and may punish himself in his own judgment as being one whom the patience of his ruler in his own mind mercifully excuses. By such connivance the Lord well reproves Judah, when He says through the prophet, *You have lied, and hast not remembered Me, nor laid it to your heart, because I have held My peace and been as one that saw not* Isaiah 57:11. Thus He both connived at faults and made them known, since He both held His peace against the sinner, and nevertheless declared this very thing, that He had held His peace. But some things, even though openly known, ought to be seasonably tolerated; that is, when circumstances afford no suitable opportunity for openly correcting them. For sores by being unseasonably cut are the worse enflamed and, if medicaments suit not the time, it is undoubtedly evident that they lose their medicinal function. But, while a fitting time for the correction of subordinates is being sought, the patience of the prelate is exercised under the very weight of their offenses. Whence it is well said by the Psalmist, *Sinners have built upon my back* Psalm 128:3. For on the back we support burdens; and therefore he complains that sinners had built upon his back, as if to say plainly, Those whom I am unable to correct I carry as a burden laid upon me.

Some hidden things, however, ought to be closely investigated, that, by the breaking out of certain symptoms, the ruler may discover all that lies closely hidden in the minds of his subordinates, and, by reproof intervening at the nick of time, from very small things become aware of greater ones. Whence it is rightly said to Ezekiel, *Son of man, dig in the wall* Ezekiel 8:8; where the said prophet presently adds, *And when I had dug in the wall, there appeared one door. And he said unto me, Go in, and see the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold every similitude of creeping things, and abomination of beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, were portrayed upon the wall* (Ibid. 9, 10). Now by Ezekiel are personified men in authority; by the wall is signified the hardness of their subordinates. And what is digging in a wall but opening the hardness of the heart by sharp inquisitions? Which wall when he had dug into, there appeared a door, because when hardness of heart is pierced either by careful questionings or by seasonable reproofs, there is shown as it were a kind of door, through which may appear the interior of the thoughts in him who is reproved. Whence also it follows well in that place, *Go in and see the wicked abominations that they do here* (Ibid.). He goes in, as it were, to see the abominations, who, by examination of certain symptoms outwardly appearing, so penetrates the hearts of his subordinates as to become cognizant of all their illicit thoughts. Whence also he added, *And I went in and saw; and behold every similitude of creeping things, and abomination of beasts* (Ibid.). By creeping things thoughts altogether earthly are signified; but by beasts such as are indeed a little lifted above the earth, but still crave the rewards of earthly recompense. For creeping things cleave to the earth with the whole body; but beasts are in a large part of the body lifted above the earth, yet are ever inclined to the earth by gulosity. Therefore there are creeping things within the wall, when thoughts are revolved in the mind which never rise above earthly cravings. There are also beasts within the wall, when, though some just and some honourable thoughts are entertained, they are still subservient to appetite for temporal gains and honour, and, though in themselves indeed lifted, as one may say, above the earth, still through desire to curry favour, as through the throat's craving, demean themselves to what is lowest. Whence also it is well added, *And all the idols of the house of Israel were portrayed upon the wall*

Ezekiel 8:10, inasmuch as it is written, *And covetousness, which is idolatry* Colossians 3:5. Rightly therefore after beasts idols are spoken of, because some, though lifting themselves as it were above the earth by honourable action, still lower themselves to the earth by dishonourable ambition. And it is well said, *Were portrayed;* since, when the shows of external things are drawn into one's inner self, whatever is meditated on under imagined images is, as it were, portrayed on the heart. It is to be observed, therefore, that first a hole in the wall, and afterwards a door, is perceived, and that then at length the hidden abomination is made apparent; because, in fact, of every single sin signs are first seen outwardly, and afterwards a door is pointed out for opening the iniquity to view; and then at length every evil that lies hidden within is disclosed.

Some things, however, ought to be gently reproved: for, when fault is committed, not of malice, but only from ignorance or infirmity, it is certainly necessary that the very censure of it be tempered with great moderation. For it is true that all of us, so long as we subsist in this mortal flesh, are subject to the infirmities of our corruption. Every one, therefore, ought to gather from himself how it behooves him to pity another's weakness, lest, if he be too fervently hurried to words of reprehension against a neighbour's infirmity, he should seem to be forgetful of his own. Whence Paul admonishes well, when he says, *If a man be overtaken in any fault, you which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted* Galatians 6:1; as if to say plainly, When what you see of the infirmity of another displeases you, consider what you are; that so the spirit may moderate itself in the zeal of reprehension, while for itself also it fears what it reprehends.

Some things, however, ought to be vehemently reproved, that, when a fault is not recognized by him who has committed it, he may be made sensible of its gravity from the mouth of the reprover; and that, when any one smooths over to himself the evil that he has perpetrated, he may be led by the asperity of his censurer to entertain grave fears of its effects against himself. For indeed it is the duty of a ruler to show by the voice of preaching the glory of the supernal country, to disclose what great temptations of the old enemy are lurking in this life's journey, and to correct with great

asperity of zeal such evils among those who are under his sway as ought not to be gently borne with; lest, in being too little incensed against faults, of all faults he be himself held guilty. Whence it is well said to Ezekiel, *Take unto you a tile, and you shall lay it before you, and pourtray upon it the city Jerusalem* Ezekiel 4:1. And immediately it is subjoined, *And you shall lay siege against it, and build forts, and cast a mount, and set camps against it, and set battering rams against it round about. And to him, for his own defence it is immediately subjoined, And do thou take unto you an iron frying-pan, and you shall set it for a wall of iron between you and the city.* For of what does the prophet Ezekiel bear the semblance but of teachers, in that it is said to him, *Take unto you a tile, and you shall lay it before you, and pourtray upon it the city Jerusalem?*

For indeed holy teachers take unto themselves a tile, when they lay hold of the earthly heart of hearers in order to teach them: which tile in truth they lay before themselves, because they keep watch over it with the entire bent of their mind: on which tile also they are commanded to pourtray the city Jerusalem, because they are at the utmost pains to represent to earthy hearts by preaching a vision of supernal peace. But, because the glory of the heavenly country is perceived in vain, unless it be known also what great temptations of the crafty enemy assail us here, it is fitly subjoined, *And you shall lay siege against it, and build forts.* For indeed holy preachers lay siege about the tile on which the city Jerusalem is delineated, when to a mind that is earthy but already seeking after the supernal country they show how great an opposition of vices in the time of this life is arrayed against it. For, when it is shown how each several sin besets us in our onward course, it is as though a siege were laid round the city Jerusalem by the voice of the preacher. But, because preachers ought not only to make known how vices assail us, but also how well-guarded virtues strengthen us, it is rightly subjoined, *And you shall build forts*. For indeed the holy preacher builds forts, when he shows what virtues resist what vices. And because, as virtue increases, the wars of temptation are for the most part augmented, it is rightly further added, *And you shall cast a mount, and set camps against it, and set battering rams round about*. For, when any preacher sets forth the mass of increasing temptation, he casts a mount. And he sets camps against Jerusalem when to the right intention of his

hearers he foretells the unsurveyed, and as it were incomprehensible, ambuscades of the cunning enemy. And he sets battering-rams round about, when he makes known the darts of temptation encompassing us on every side in this life, and piercing through our wall of virtues.

But although the ruler may nicely insinuate all these things, he procures not for himself lasting absolution, unless he glow with a spirit of jealousy against the delinquencies of all and each. Whence in that place it is further rightly subjoined, *And do thou take to you an iron frying-pan, and you shall set it for a wall of iron between you and the city*. For by the frying-pan is denoted a frying of the mind, and by iron the hardness of reproof.

But what more fiercely fries and excruciates the teacher's mind than zeal for God? Hence Paul was being burnt with the frying of this frying-pan when he said, *Who is made weak, and I am not made weak? Who is offended, and I burn not?* 2 Corinthians 11:29. And, because whosoever is inflamed with zeal for God is protected by a guard continually, lest he should deserve to be condemned for negligence, it is rightly said, You shall set it for a wall of iron between you and the city. For an iron frying-pan is set for a wall of iron between the prophet and the city, because, when rulers already exhibit strong zeal, they keep the same zeal as a strong defence afterwards between themselves and their hearers, lest they should be destitute then of the power to punish from having been previously remiss in reproving.

But meanwhile it is to be borne in mind that, while the mind of the teacher exasperates itself for rebuke, it is very difficult for him to avoid breaking out into saying something that he ought not to say. And for the most part it happens that, when the faults of subordinates are reprehended with severe invective, the tongue of the master is betrayed into excess of language. And, when rebuke is immoderately hot, the hearts of the delinquents are depressed to despair. Wherefore it is necessary for the exasperated ruler, when he considers that he has wounded more than he should have done the feelings of his subordinates, to have recourse in his own mind to penitence, so as by lamentations to obtain pardon in the sight of the

Truth; and even for this cause, that it is through the ardour of his zeal for it that he sins. This is what the Lord in a figure enjoins through Moses, saying, *If a man go in simplicity of heart with his friend into the wood to hew wood, and the wood of the axe fly from his hand, and the iron slip from the handle and smite his friend and slay him, he shall flee unto one of the aforesaid cities and live; lest haply the next of kin to him whose blood has been shed, while his heart is hot, pursue him, and overtake him, and smite him mortally* Deuteronomy 19:4-5. For indeed we go with a friend into the wood as often as we betake ourselves to look into the delinquencies of subordinates. And we hew wood in simplicity of heart, when with pious intention we cut off the vices of delinquents. But the axe flies from the hand, when rebuke is drawn on to asperity more than need requires. And the iron leaps from the handle, when out of reproof issues speech too hard. And he smites and slays his friend, because overstrained contumely cuts him off from the spirit of love. For the mind of one who is reproved suddenly breaks out into hatred, if immoderate reproof charges it beyond its due. But he who smites wood incautiously and destroys his neighbour must needs fly to three cities, that in one of them he may live protected; since if, betaking himself to the laments of penitence, he is hidden under hope and charity in sacramental unity, he is not held guilty of the perpetrated homicide. And him the next of kin to the slain man does not kill, even when he finds him; because, when the strict judge comes, who has joined himself to us by sharing in our nature, without doubt He requires not the penalty of his fault from him whom faith, hope and charity hide under the shelter of his pardon.

Chapter 11

How intent the ruler ought to be on meditations in the Sacred Law.

But all this is duly executed by a ruler, if, inspired by the spirit of heavenly fear and love, he meditate daily on the precepts of Sacred Writ, that the words of Divine admonition may restore in him the power of solicitude and of provident circumspection with regard to the celestial life, which familiar intercourse with men continually destroys; and that one who is drawn to oldness of life by secular society may by the aspiration of compunction be ever renewed to love of the spiritual country. For the heart runs greatly to waste in the midst of human talk; and, since it is undoubtedly evident that, when driven by the tumults of external occupations, it loses its balance and falls, one ought incessantly to take care that through keen pursuit of instruction it may rise again. For hence it is that Paul admonishes his disciple who had been put over the flock, saying, *Till I come, give attendance to reading* 1 Timothy 4:13. Hence David says, *How have I loved Your Law, O Lord! It is my meditation all the day* Psalm 109:97. Hence the Lord commanded Moses concerning the carrying of the ark, saying. *You shall make four rings of gold, which you shall put in the four corners of the ark, and you shall make staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold, and shall put them through the rings which are by the sides of the ark, that it may be borne with them, and they shall always be in the rings, nor shall they ever be drawn out from them* Exodus 25:12, *seq.*. What but the holy Church is figured by the ark? To which four rings of gold in the four corners are ordered to be adjoined, because, in that it is thus extended towards the four quarters of the globe, it is declared undoubtedly to be equipped for journeying with the four books of the holy Gospel. And staves of shittim-wood are made, and are put through the same rings for carrying, because strong and persevering teachers, as incorruptible pieces of timber, are to be sought for, who by cleaving ever to instruction out of the sacred volumes may declare the unity of the holy Church, and, as it were, carry the ark by being let into its rings. For indeed to carry the ark by means of staves is

through preaching to bring the holy Church before the rude minds of unbelievers by means of good teachers. And these are also ordered to be overlaid with gold, that, while they are resonant to others in discourse, they may also themselves glitter in the splendour of their lives. Of whom it is further fitly added, *They shall always be in the rings, nor shall they ever be drawn out from them;* because it is surely necessary that those who attend upon the office of preaching should not recede from the study of sacred lore. For to this end it is that the staves are ordered to be always in the rings, that, when occasion requires the ark to be carried, no tardiness in carrying may arise from the staves having to be put in; because, that is to say, when a pastor is enquired of by his subordinates on any spiritual matter, it is exceedingly ignominious, should he then go about to learn, when he ought to solve the question. But let the staves remain ever in the rings, that teachers, ever meditating in their own hearts the words of Sacred Writ, may lift without delay the ark of the covenant; as will be the case if they teach at once whatever is required. Hence the first Pastor of the Church well admonishes all other pastors saying, *Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you* 1 Peter 3:15: as though he should say plainly, That no delay may hinder the carrying of the ark, let the staves never be withdrawn from the rings.

Pastoral Rule (Book III)

How the Ruler, While Living Well, Ought to Teach and Admonish Those that are Put Under Him.

Prologue.

Since, then, we have shown what manner of man the pastor ought to be, let us now set forth after what manner he should teach. For, as long before us Gregory Nazianzen of reverend memory has taught, one and the same exhortation does not suit all, inasmuch as neither are all bound together by similarity of character. For the things that profit some often hurt others; seeing that also for the most part herbs which nourish some animals are fatal to others; and the gentle hissing that quiets horses incites whelps; and the medicine which abates one disease aggravates another; and the bread which invigorates the life of the strong kills little children. Therefore according to the quality of the hearers ought the discourse of teachers to be fashioned, so as to suit all and each for their several needs, and yet never deviate from the art of common edification. For what are the intent minds of hearers but, so to speak, a kind of tight tensions of strings in a harp, which the skilful player, that he may produce a tune not at variance with itself, strikes variously? And for this reason the strings render back a consonant modulation, that they are struck indeed with one quill, but not with one kind of stroke. Whence every teacher also, that he may edify all in the one virtue of charity, ought to touch the hearts of his hearers out of one doctrine, but not with one and the same exhortation.

Chapter 1

What diversity there ought to be in the art of preaching.

Differently to be admonished are these that follow:

- Men and women.
- The poor and the rich.
- The joyful and the sad.
- Prelates and subordinates.
- Servants and masters.
- The wise of this world and the dull.
- The impudent and the bashful.
- The forward and the fainthearted.
- The impatient and the patient.
- The kindly disposed and the envious.
- The simple and the insincere.
- The whole and the sick.
- Those who fear scourges, and therefore live innocently; and those who have grown so hard in iniquity as not to be corrected even by scourges.
- The too silent, and those who spend time in much speaking.
- The slothful and the hasty.
- The meek and the passionate.
- The humble and the haughty.
- The obstinate and the fickle.
- The gluttonous and the abstinent.
- Those who mercifully give of their own, and those who would fain seize what belongs to others.
- Those who neither seize the things of others nor are bountiful with their own; and those who both give away the things they have, and yet cease not to seize the things of others.
- Those that are at variance, and those that are at peace.
- Lovers of strifes and peacemakers.
- Those that understand not aright the words of sacred law; and those who understand them indeed aright, but speak them without humility.

- Those who, though able to preach worthily, are afraid through excessive humility; and those whom imperfection or age debars from preaching, and yet rashness impels to it.
- Those who prosper in what they desire in temporal matters; and those who covet indeed the things that are of the world, and yet are wearied with the toils of adversity.
- Those who are bound by wedlock, and those who are free from the ties of wedlock.
- Those who have had experience of carnal intercourse, and those who are ignorant of it.
- Those who deplore sins of deed, and those who deplore sins of thought.
- Those who bewail misdeeds, yet forsake them not; and those who forsake them, yet bewail them not.
- Those who even praise the unlawful things they do; and those who censure what is wrong, yet avoid it not.
- Those who are overcome by sudden passion, and those who are bound in guilt of set purpose.
- Those who, though their unlawful deeds are trivial, yet do them frequently; and those who keep themselves from small sins, but are occasionally whelmed in graver ones.
- Those who do not even begin what is good, and those who fail entirely to complete the good begun.
- Those who do evil secretly and good publicly; and those who conceal the good they do, and yet in some things done publicly allow evil to be thought of them.

But of what profit is it for us to run through all these things collected together in a list, unless we also set forth, with all possible brevity, the modes of admonition for each?

(*Admonition* 1.) Differently, then, to be admonished are men and women; because on the former heavier injunctions, on the latter lighter are to be laid, that those may be exercised by great things, but these winningly converted by light ones.

(*Admonition* 2.) Differently to be admonished are young men and old; because for the most part severity of admonition directs the former to improvement, while kind remonstrance disposes the latter

to better deeds. For it is written, *Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father* 1 Timothy 5:1.

Chapter 2

How the poor and the rich should be admonished.

(*Admonition* 3.) Differently to be admonished are the poor and the rich: for to the former we ought to offer the solace of comfort against tribulation, but in the latter to induce fear as against elation. For to the poor one it is said by the Lord through the prophet, *Fear not, for you shall not be confounded* Isaiah 54:4. And not long after, soothing her, He says, *O you poor little one, tossed with tempest* Isaiah 54:11. And again He comforts her, saying, *I have chosen you in the furnace of poverty* Isaiah 48:10. But, on the other hand, Paul says to his disciple concerning the rich, *Charge the rich of this world, that they be not high-minded nor trust in the uncertainty of their riches* 1 Timothy 6:17; where it is to be particularly noted that the teacher of humility in making mention of the rich, says not *Entreat*, but *Charge;* because, though pity is to be bestowed on infirmity, yet to elation no honour is due. To such, therefore, the right thing that is said is the more rightly commanded, according as they are puffed up with loftiness of thought in transitory things. Of them the Lord says in the Gospel, *Woe unto you that are rich, which have your consolation* Luke 6:24. For, since they know not what eternal joys are, they are consoled out of the abundance of the present life. Therefore consolation is to be offered to those who are tried in the furnace of poverty; and fear is to be induced in those whom the consolation of temporal glory lifts up; that both those may learn that they possess riches which they see not, and these become aware that they can by no means keep the riches that they see. Yet for the most part the character of persons changes the order in which they stand; so that the rich man may be humble and the poor man proud. Hence the tongue of the preacher ought soon to be adapted to the life of the hearer, so as to smite elation in a poor man all the more sharply as not even the poverty that has come upon him brings it down, and to cheer all the more gently the humility of the rich as even the abundance which elevates them does not elate them.

Sometimes, however, even a proud rich man is to be propitiated by blandishment in exhortation, since hard sores also are usually softened by soothing fomentations, and the rage of the insane is often restored to health by the bland words of the physician, and, when they are pleasantly humoured, the disease of their insanity is mitigated. For neither is this to be lightly regarded, that, when an adverse spirit entered into Saul, David took his harp and assuaged his madness 1 Samuel 18:10. For what is intimated by Saul but the elation of men in power, and what by David but the humble life of the holy? When, then, Saul is seized by the unclean spirit, his madness is appeased by David's singing; since, when the senses of men in power are turned to frenzy by elation, it is meet that they should be recalled to a healthy state by the calmness of our speech, as by the sweetness of a harp. But sometimes, when the powerful of this world are taken to task, they are first to be searched by certain similitudes, as on a matter not concerning them; and, when they have pronounced a right sentence as against another man, then in fitting ways they are to be smitten with regard to their own guilt; so that the mind puffed up with temporal power may in no wise lift itself up against the reprover, having by its own judgment trodden on the neck of pride, and may not try to defend itself, being bound by the sentence of its own mouth. For hence it was that Nathan the prophet, having come to take the king to task, asked his judgment as if concerning the cause of a poor man against a rich one 2 Samuel 12:4-5 *seq.*, that the king might first pronounce sentence, and afterwards hear of his own guilt, to the end that he might by no means contradict the righteous doom that he had uttered against himself. Thus the holy man, considering both the sinner and the king, studied in a wonderful order first to bind the daring culprit by confession, and afterwards to cut him to the heart by rebuke. He concealed for a while whom he aimed at, but smote him suddenly when he had him. For the blow would perchance have fallen with less force had he purposed to smite the sin openly from the beginning of his discourse; but by first introducing the similitude he sharpened the rebuke which he concealed. He had come as a physician to a sick man; he saw that the sore must be cut; but he doubted of the sick man's patience. Therefore he hid the medicinal steel under his robe, which he suddenly drew out and plunged into the sore, that the patient

might feel the cutting blade before he saw it, lest, seeing it first, he should refuse to feel it.

Chapter 3

How the joyful and the sad are to be admonished.

*Admonition*4. Differently to be admonished are the joyful and the sad. That is, before the joyful are to be set the sad things that follow upon punishment; but before the sad the promised glad things of the kingdom. Let the joyful learn by the asperity of threatenings what to be afraid of: let the sad bear what joys of reward they may look forward to. For to the former it is said, *Woe unto you that laugh now! For you shall weep* Luke 6:25; but the latter hear from the teaching of the same Master, *I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man shall take from you* John 16:22. But some are not made joyful or sad by circumstances, but are so by temperament. And to such it should be intimated that certain defects are connected with certain temperaments; that the joyful have lechery close at hand, and the sad wrath. Hence it is necessary for every one to consider not only what he suffers from his peculiar temperament, but also what worse thing presses on him in connection with it; lest, while he fights not at all against that which he has, he succumb also to that from which he supposes himself free.

Chapter 4

How subjects and prelates are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 5.) Differently to be admonished are subjects and prelates: the former that subjection crush them not, the latter that superior place elate them not: the former that they fail not to fulfil what is commanded them, the latter that they command not more to be fulfilled than is just: the former that they submit humbly, the latter that they preside temperately. For this, which may be understood also figuratively, is said to the former, *Children, obey your parents in the Lord:* but to the latter it is enjoined, *And you, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath* Colossians 3:20-21. Let the former learn how to order their inward thoughts before the eyes of the hidden judge; the latter how also to those that are committed to them to afford outwardly examples of good living. For prelates ought to know that, if they ever perpetrate what is wrong, they are worthy of as many deaths as they transmit examples of perdition to their subjects. Wherefore it is necessary that they guard themselves so much the more cautiously from sin as by the bad things they do they die not alone, but are guilty of the souls of others, which by their bad example they have destroyed. Wherefore the former are to be admonished, lest they should be strictly published, if merely on their own account they should be unable to stand acquitted; the latter, lest they should be judged for the errors of their subjects, even though on their own account they find themselves secure. Those are to be admonished that they live with all the more anxiety about themselves as they are not entangled by care for others; but these that they accomplish their charge of others in such wise as not to desist from charge of themselves, and so to be ardent in anxiety about themselves as not to grow sluggish in the custody of those committed to them. To the one, who is at leisure for his own concerns, it is said, *Go to the ant, you sluggard, and consider her ways, and learn wisdom* Proverbs 6:6: but the other is terribly admonished, when it is said, *My son, if you be surety for your friend, you have stricken your hand with a stranger, and art snared with the words of your mouth, and art taken with your own speeches* Proverbs 6:1. For to be

surety for a friend is to take charge of the soul of another on the surety of one's own behaviour. Whence also the hand is stricken with a stranger, because the mind is bound with the care of a responsibility which before was not. But he is snared with the words of his mouth, and taken with his own speeches, because, while he is compelled to speak good things to those who are committed to him, he must needs himself in the first place observe the things that he speaks. He is therefore snared with the words of his mouth, being constrained by the requirement of reason not to let his life be relaxed to what agrees not with his teaching. Hence before the strict judge he is compelled to accomplish as much in deed as it is plain he has enjoined on others with his voice. Thus in the passage above cited this exhortation is also presently added, *Do therefore what I say, my son, and deliver yourself, seeing you have fallen into the hands of your neighbour: run up and down, hasten, arouse your friend; give not sleep to your eyes, nor let your eyelids slumber* Proverbs 6:3. For whosoever is put over others for an example of life is admonished not only to keep watch himself, but also to arouse his friend. For it is not enough for him to keep watch in living well, if he do not also sever him when he is set over from the torpor of sin. For it is well said, *Give not sleep to your eyes, nor let your eyelids slumber* Proverbs 6:4. For indeed to give sleep to the eyes is to cease from earnestness, so as to neglect altogether the care of our subordinates. But the eyelids slumber when our thoughts, weighed down by sloth, connive at what they know ought to be reproved in subordinates. For to be fast asleep is neither to know nor to correct the deeds of those committed to us. But to know what things are to be blamed, and still through laziness of mind not to amend them by meet rebukes, is not to sleep, but to slumber. Yet the eye through slumbering passes into the deepest sleep; since for the most part, when one who is over others cuts not off the evil that he knows, he comes sooner or later, as his negligence deserves, not even to know what is done wrong by his subjects.

Wherefore those who are over others are to be admonished, that through earnestness of circumspection they have eyes watchful within and round about, and strive to become living creatures of heaven Ezekiel 1:18. For the living creatures of heaven are described as full of eyes round about and within Revelation 4:6. And so it is meet that those who are over others should have eyes within and round about,

so as both in themselves to study to please the inward judge, and also, affording outwardly examples of life, to detect the things that should be corrected in others.

Subjects are to be admonished that they judge not rashly the lives of their superiors, if perchance they see them act blamably in anything, lest whence they rightly find fault with evil they thence be sunk by the impulse of elation to lower depths. They are to be admonished that, when they consider the faults of their superiors, they grow not too bold against them, but, if any of their deeds are exceedingly bad, so judge of them within themselves that, constrained by the fear of God, they still refuse not to bear the yoke of reverence under them. Which thing we shall show the better if we bring forward what David did 1 Samuel 24:4 *seq.*. For when Saul the persecutor had entered into a cave to ease himself, David, who had so long suffered under his persecution, was within it with his men. And, when his men incited him to smite Saul, he cut them short with the reply, that he ought not to put forth his hand against the Lord's anointed. And yet he rose unperceived, and cut off the border of his robe. For what is signified by Saul but bad rulers, and what by David but good subjects? Saul's easing himself, then, means rulers extending the wickedness conceived in their hearts to works of woeful stench, and their showing the noisome thoughts within them by carrying them out into deeds. Yet him David was afraid to strike, because the pious minds of subjects, withholding themselves from the whole plague of backbiting, smite the life of their superiors with no sword of the tongue, even when they blame them for imperfection. And when through infirmity they can scarce refrain from speaking, however humbly, of some extreme and obvious evils in their superiors, they cut as it were silently the border of their robe; because, to wit, when, even though harmlessly and secretly, they derogate from the dignity of superiors, they disfigure as it were the garment of the king who is set over them; yet still they return to themselves, and blame themselves most vehemently for even the slightest defamation in speech. Hence it is also well written in that place, *Afterward David's heart smote him, because he had cut off the border of Saul's robe* 1 Samuel 24:6. For indeed the deeds of superiors are not to be smitten with the sword of the mouth, even when they are rightly judged to be worthy of blame. But if ever, even in the least, the tongue slips into

censure of them, the heart must needs be depressed by the affliction of penitence, to the end that it may return to itself, and, when it has offended against the power set over it, may dread the judgment against itself of Him by whom it was set over it. For, when we offend against those who are set over us, we go against the ordinance of Him who set them over us. Whence also Moses, when he had become aware that the people complained against himself and Aaron, said, *For what are we? Not against us are your murmurings, but against the Lord* Exodus 16:8.

Chapter 5

How servants and masters are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 6). Differently to be admonished are servants and masters. Servants, to wit, that they ever keep in view the humility of their condition; but masters, that they lose not recollection of their nature, in which they are constituted on an equality with servants. Servants are to be admonished that they despise not their masters, lest they offend God, if by behaving themselves proudly they gainsay His ordinance: masters, too, are to be admonished, that they are proud against God with respect to His gift, if they acknowledge not those whom they hold in subjection by reason of their condition to be their equals by reason of their community of nature. The former are to be admonished to know themselves to be servants of masters; the latter are to be admonished to acknowledge themselves to be fellow-servants of servants. For to those it is said, *Servants, obey your masters according to the flesh* Colossians 3:22; and again, *Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their masters worthy of all honour* 1 Timothy 6:1; but to these it is said, *And you, masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that both their and your Master is in heaven* Ephesians 6:9.

Chapter 6

How the wise and the dull are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 7). Differently to be admonished are the wise of this world and the dull. For the wise are to be admonished that they leave off knowing what they know: the dull also are to be admonished that they seek to know what they know not. In the former this thing first, that they think themselves wise, is to be thrown down; in the latter whatsoever is already known of heavenly wisdom is to be built up; since, being in no wise proud, they have, as it were, prepared their hearts for supporting a building. With those we should labour that they become more wisely foolish, leave foolish wisdom, and learn the wise foolishness of God: to these we should preach that from what is accounted foolishness they should pass, as from a nearer neighbourhood, to true wisdom. For to the former it is said, *If any man among you seems to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise* 1 Corinthians 3:18: but to the latter it is said, *Not many wise men after the flesh* 1 Corinthians 1:26; and again, *God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise* 1 Corinthians 1:27. The former are for the most part converted by arguments of reasoning; the latter sometimes better by examples. Those it doubtless profits to lie vanquished in their own allegations; but for these it is sometimes enough to get knowledge of the praiseworthy deeds of others. Whence also the excellent teacher, who was debtor to the wise and foolish Romans 1:14, when he was admonishing some of the Hebrews that were wise, but some also that were somewhat slow, speaking to them of the fulfilment of the Old Testament, overcame the wisdom of the former by argument, saying, *That which decays and waxes old is ready to vanish away* Hebrews 8:13. But, when he perceived that some were to be drawn by examples only, he added in the same epistle, *Saints had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword* (Ibid. 11:36, 37): and again, *Remember those who were set over you, who spoke to you the Word of God, whose faith follow, looking to the end of their conversation* Hebrews 13:7; that so

victorious reason might subdue the one sort, but the gentle force of example persuade the other to mount to greater things.

Chapter 7

How the impudent and bashful are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 8). Differently to be admonished are the impudent and the bashful. For those nothing but hard rebuke restrains from the vice of impudence; while these for the most part a modest exhortation disposes to amendment. Those do not know that they are in fault, unless they be rebuked even by many; to these it usually suffices for their conversion that the teacher at least gently reminds them of their evil deeds. For those one best corrects who reprehends them by direct invective; but to these greater profit ensues, if what is rebuked in them be touched, as it were, by a side stroke. Thus the Lord, openly upbraiding the impudent people of the Jews, saying, *There has come unto you a whore's forehead; you would not blush* Jeremiah 3:3. But again He revives them when ashamed, saying, *You shall forget the confusion of your youth, and shall not remember the reproach of your widowhood; for your Maker will reign over you* Isaiah 54:4. Paul also openly upbraids the Galatians impudently sinning, when he says, *O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you* Galatians 3:1? And again, *Are you so foolish, that, having begun in the Spirit, you are now made perfect in the flesh* Galatians 3:3? But the faults of those who are ashamed he reprehends as though sympathizing with them, saying, *I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last you have flourished again to care for me, as indeed you did care, for you lacked opportunity* Philippians 4:10; so that hard upbraiding might discover the faults of the former, and a softer address veil the negligence of the latter.

Chapter 8

How the forward and the faint-hearted are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 9.) Differently to be admonished are the forward and the faint-hearted. For the former, presuming on themselves too much, disdain all others when reproved by them; but the latter, while too conscious of their own infirmity, for the most part fall into despondency. Those count all they do to be singularly eminent; these think what they do to be exceedingly despised, and so are broken down to despondency. Therefore the works of the forward are to be finely sifted by the reprover, that wherein they please themselves they may be shown to displease God .

For we then best correct the forward, when what they believe themselves to have done well we show to have been ill done; that whence glory is believed to have been gained, thence wholesome confusion may ensue. But sometimes, when they are not at all aware of being guilty of the vice of forwardness, they more speedily come to correction if they are confounded by the infamy of some other person's more manifest guilt, sought out from a side quarter; that from that which they cannot defend, they may be made conscious of wrongly holding to what they do defend. Whence, when Paul saw the Corinthians to be forwardly puffed up one against another, so that one said he was of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas, and another of Christ 1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:4, he brought forward the crime of incest, which had not only been perpetrated among them, but also remained uncorrected, saying, *It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not even among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you* 1 Corinthians 5:1-2. As if to say plainly, Why do you say in your forwardness that you are of this one or of the other, while showing in the dissoluteness of your negligence, that you are of none of them?

But on the other hand we more fitly bring back the faint-hearted to the way of well-doing, if we search collaterally for some good points about them, so that, while some things in them we attack with our reproof, others we may embrace with our praise; to the end that the hearing of praise may nourish their tenderness, which the rebuking of their fault chastises. And for the most part we make more way with them for their profit, if we also make mention of their good deeds; and, in case of some wrong things having been done by them, if we find not fault with them as though they were already perpetrated, but, as it were, prohibit them as what ought not to be perpetrated; that so both the favour shown may increase the things which we approve, and our modest exhortation avail more with the faint-hearted against the things which we blame. Whence the same Paul, when he came to know that the Thessalonians, who stood fast in the preaching which they had received, were troubled with a certain faint-heartedness as though the end of the world were near at hand, first praises that wherein he sees them to be strong, and afterwards, with cautious admonition, strengthens what was weak. For he says, *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith grows exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other abounds; so that we ourselves too glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith* 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4. But, having premised these flattering encomiums of their life, a little while after he subjoined, *Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto Him, that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as sent by us, as that the day of the Lord is at hand* 2 Thessalonians 2:1. For the true teacher so proceeded that they should first hear, in being praised, what they might thankfully acknowledge, and afterwards, in being exhorted, what they should follow; to the end that the precedent praise should settle their mind, lest the subjoined admonition should shake it; and, though he knew that they had been disquieted by suspicion of the end being near, he did not yet reprove them as having been so, but, as if ignorant of the past, forbade them to be disquieted in future; so that, while they believed themselves to be unknown to their preacher with respect even to the levity of their disquietude, they might be as much afraid of being open to blame as they were of being known by him to be so.

Chapter 9

How the impatient and the patient are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 10.) Differently to be admonished are the impatient and the patient. For the impatient are to be told that, while they neglect to bridle their spirit, they are hurried through many steep places of iniquity which they seek not after, inasmuch as fury drives the mind whither desire draws it not, and, when perturbed, it does, not knowing, what it afterwards grieves for when it knows. The impatient are also to be told that, when carried headlong by the impulse of emotion, they act in some ways as though beside themselves, and are hardly aware afterwards of the evil they have done; and, while they offer no resistance to their perturbation, they bring into confusion even things that may have been well done when the mind was calm, and overthrow under sudden impulse whatever they have haply long built up with provident toil. For the very virtue of charity, which is the mother and guardian of all virtues, is lost through the vice of impatience. For it is written, *Charity is patient* 1 Corinthians 13:4. Wherefore where patience is not, charity is not. Through this vice of impatience, too, instruction, the nurse of virtues, is dissipated. For it is written, *The instruction of a man is known by his patience* Proverbs 19:11. Every man, then, is shown to be by so much less instructed as he is convicted of being less patient. For neither can he truly impart what is good through instruction, if in his life he knows not how to bear what is evil in others with equanimity.

Further, through this vice of impatience for the most part the sin of arrogance pierces the mind; since, when any one is impatient of being looked down upon in this world, he endeavours to show off any hidden good that he may have, and so through impatience is drawn on to arrogance; and, while he cannot bear contempt, he glories ostentatiously in self-display. Whence it is written, *Better is the patient than the arrogant* Ecclesiastes 7:9; because, in truth, one that is patient chooses to suffer any evils whatever rather than that his hidden good should come to be known through the vice of ostentation. But the arrogant, on the contrary, chooses that even

pretended good should be vaunted of him, lest he should possibly suffer even the least evil. Since, then, when patience is relinquished, all other good things also that have been done are overthrown, it is rightly enjoined on Ezekiel that in the altar of God a trench be made; to wit, that in it the whole burnt-offerings laid on the altar might be preserved Ezekiel 43:13. For, if there were not a trench in the altar, the passing breeze would scatter every sacrifice that it might find there. But what do we take the altar of God to be but the soul of the righteous man, which lays upon itself before His eyes as many sacrifices as it has done good deeds? And what is the trench of the altar but the patience of good men, which, while it humbles the mind to endure adversities, shows it to be placed low down after the manner of a ditch? Wherefore let a trench be made in the altar, lest the breeze should scatter the sacrifice laid upon it: that is, let the mind of the elect keep patience, lest, stirred with the wind of impatience, it lose even that which it has wrought well. Well, too, this same trench is directed to be of one cubit, because, if patience fails not, the measure of unity is preserved. Whence also Paul says, *Bear one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law Christ* Galatians 6:2. For the law of Christ is the charity of unity, which they alone fulfil who are guilty of no excess even when they are burdened. Let the impatient hear what is written, *Better is the patient than the mighty, and he that rules his spirit than he that takes cities* Proverbs 16:32. For victory over cities is a less thing, because that which is subdued is without; but a far greater thing is that which is conquered by patience, since the mind itself is by itself overcome, and subjects itself to itself, when patience compels it to bridle itself within. Let the impatient hear what the Truth says to His elect; *In your patience you shall possess your souls* Luke 21:19. For we are so wonderfully made that reason possesses the soul, and the soul the body. But the soul is ousted from its right of possession of the body, if it is not first possessed by reason. Therefore the Lord pointed out patience as the guardian of our state, in that He taught us to possess ourselves in it. Thus we learn how great is the sin of impatience, through which we lose the very possession of what we are. Let the impatient hear what is said again through Solomon; *A fool utters all his mind, but a wise man puts it off, and reserves it until afterwards* Proverbs 29:11. For one is so driven by the impulse of impatience as to utter forth the whole mind, which the perturbation within throws out the more quickly for

this reason, that no discipline of wisdom fences it round. But the wise man puts it off, and reserves it till afterwards. For, when injured, he desires not to avenge himself at the present time, because in his tolerance he even wishes that men should be spared; but yet he is not ignorant that all things are righteously avenged at the last judgment.

On the other hand the patient are to be admonished that they grieve not inwardly for what they bear outwardly, lest they spoil with the infection of malice within a sacrifice of so great value which without they offer whole; and lest the sin of their grieving, not perceived by men, but yet seen as sin under the divine scrutiny, be made so much the worse as it claims to itself the fair show of virtue before men.

The patient therefore should be told to study to love those whom they must needs bear with; lest, if love follow not patience, the virtue exhibited be turned to a worse fault of hatred. Whence Paul, when he said, *Charity is patient*, immediately added, *Is kind* 1 Corinthians 13:4; showing certainly that those whom in patience she bears with in kindness also she ceases not to love. Whence the same excellent teacher, when he was persuading his disciples to patience, saying, *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and indignation, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you* Ephesians 4:31, having as it were now set all outward things in good order, turns himself to those that are within, when he subjoins, *With all malice* Ephesians 4:31; because, truly, in vain are indignation, clamour, and evil speaking put away from the things that are without, if in the things that are within malice, the mother of vices, bears sway; and to no purpose is wickedness cut off from the branches outside if it is kept at the root within to spring up in more manifold ways. Whence also the Truth in person says, *Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, and pray for them which persecute you and say evil of you falsely* Luke 6:27. It is virtue therefore before men to bear with adversaries; but it is virtue before God to love them; because the only sacrifice which God accepts is that which, before His eyes, on the altar of good work, the flame of charity kindles. Hence it is that to some who were patient, and yet did not love, He says, *And why do you see the mote in your brother's eye, and see not the beam in your own eye?* Matthew 7:3; Luke 6:41. For indeed the perturbation of impatience is a mote; but

malice in the heart is a beam in the eye. For that the breeze of temptation drives to and fro; but this confirmed iniquity carries almost immoveably. Rightly, however, it is there subjoined, *You hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of your own eye, and then shall you see to cast out the mote out of your brother's eye* (Ibid.); as if it were said to the wicked mind, inwardly grieving while showing itself by patience outwardly as holy, First shake off from you the weight of malice, and then blame others for the levity of impatience; lest, while you take no pains to conquer pretence, it be worse for you to bear with the faultiness of others.

For it usually comes to pass with the patient that at the time, indeed, when they suffer hardships, or hear insults, they are smitten with no vexation, and so exhibit patience as to fail not to keep also innocence of heart; but, when after a while they recall to memory these very same things that they have endured, they inflame themselves with the fire of vexation, they seek reasons for vengeance, and, in retracting, turn into malice the meekness which they had in bearing. Such are the sooner succoured by the preacher, if the cause of this change be disclosed. For the cunning adversary wages war against two; that is, by inflaming one to be the first to offer insults, and provoking the other to return insults under a sense of injury. But for the most part, while he is already conqueror of him who has been persuaded to inflict the injury, he is conquered by him who bears the infliction with an equal mind. Wherefore, being victorious over the one whom he has subjugated by incensing him, he lifts himself with all his might against the other, and is grieved at his firmly resisting and conquering; and so, because he has been unable to move him in the very flinging of insults, he rests meanwhile from open contest, and provoking his thought by secret suggestion, seeks a fit time for deceiving him. For, having lost in public warfare, he burns to lay hidden snares. In a time of quiet he returns to the mind of the conqueror, brings back to his memory either temporal harms or darts of insults, and by exceedingly exaggerating all that has been inflicted on him represents it as intolerable: and with so great vexation does he perturb the mind that for the most part the patient one, led captive after victory, blushes for having borne such things calmly, and is sorry that he did not return insults, and seeks to pay back something worse, should opportunity be afforded. To whom,

then, are these like but to those who by bravery are victorious in the field, but by negligence are afterwards taken within the gates of the city? To whom are they like but to those whom a violent attack of sickness removes not from life, but who die from a relapse of fever coming gently on? Therefore the patient are to be admonished, that they guard their heart after victory; that they be on the lookout for the enemy, overcome in open warfare, laying snares against the walls of their mind; that they be the more afraid of a sickness creeping on again; lest the cunning enemy, should he afterwards deceive them, rejoice with the greater exultation in that he treads on the necks of conquerors which had long been inflexible against him.

Chapter 10

How the kindly-disposed and the envious are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 11.) Differently to be admonished are the kindly-disposed and the envious. For the kindly-disposed are to be admonished so to rejoice in what is good in others as to desire to have the like as their own; so to praise with affection the deeds of their neighbours as also to multiply them by imitation, lest in this stadium of the present life they assist at the contest of others as eager backers, but inert spectators, and remain without a prize after the contest, in that they toiled not in the contest, and should then regard with sorrow the palms of those in the midst of whose toils they stood idle. For indeed we sin greatly if we love not the good deeds of others: but we win no reward if we imitate not so far as we can the things which we love. Wherefore the kindly-disposed should be told that if they make no haste to imitate the good which they applaud, the holiness of virtue pleases them in like manner as the vanity of scenic exhibitions of skill pleases foolish spectators: for these extol with applauses the performances of charioteers and players, and yet do not long to be such as they see those whom they praise to be. They admire them for having done pleasing things, and yet they shun pleasing in like manner. The kindly-disposed are to be told that when they behold the deeds of their neighbours they should return to their own heart, and presume not on actions which are not their own, nor praise what is good while they refuse to do it. More heavily, indeed, must those be smitten by final vengeance who have been pleased by that which they would not imitate.

The envious are to be admonished how great is their blindness who fail by other men's advancement, and pine away at other men's rejoicing; how great is their unhappiness who are made worse by the bettering of their neighbour, and in beholding the increase of another's prosperity are uneasily vexed within themselves, and die of the plague of their own heart. What can be more unhappy than these, who, when touched by the sight of happiness, are made more wicked

by the pain of seeing it? But, moreover, the good things of others which they cannot have they might, if they loved them, make their own. For indeed all are constituted together in faith as are many members in one body; which are indeed diverse as to their office, but in mutually agreeing with each other are made one. Whence it comes to pass that the foot sees by the eye, and the eyes walk by the feet; that the hearing of the ears serves the mouth, and the tongue of the mouth concurs with the ears for their benefit; that the belly supports the hands, and the hands work for the belly. In the very arrangement of the body, therefore, we learn what we should observe in our conduct. It is, then, too shameful not to act up to what we are. Those things, in fact, are ours which we love in others, even though we cannot follow them; and what things are loved in us become theirs that love them. Hence, then, let the envious consider of how great power is charity, which makes ours without labour works of labour not our own. The envious are therefore to be told that, when they fail to keep themselves from spite, they are being sunk into the old wickedness of the wily foe. For of him it is written, *But by envy of the devil death entered into the world* Wisdom 2:24. For, because he had himself lost heaven, he envied it to created man, and, being himself ruined, by ruining others he heaped up his own damnation. The envious are to be admonished, that they may learn to how great slips of ruin growing under them they are liable; since, while they cast not forth spite out of their heart, they are slipping down to open wickedness of deeds. For, unless Cain had envied the accepted sacrifice of his brother, he would never have come to taking away his life. Whence it is written, *And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell* Genesis 4:4. Thus spite on account of the sacrifice was the seed-plot of fratricide. For him whose being better than himself vexed him he cut off from being at all. The envious are to be told that, while they consume themselves with this inward plague, they destroy whatever good they seem to have within them. Whence it is written, *Soundness of heart is the life of the flesh, but envy the rottenness of the bones* Proverbs 14:30. For what is signified by the flesh but certain weak and tender actions, and what by the bones but brave ones? And for the most part it comes to pass that some, with innocence of heart, in some of their actions seem weak; but others, though performing some stout deeds

before human eyes, still pine away inwardly with the pestilence of envy towards what is good in others. Wherefore it is well said, *Soundness of heart is the life of the flesh;* because, if innocence of mind is kept, even such things as are weak outwardly are in time strengthened. And rightly it is there added, *Envy is the rottenness of the bones;* because through the vice of spite what seems strong to human eyes perishes in the eyes of God . For the rotting of the bones through envy means that certain even strong things utterly perish.

Chapter 11

How the simple and the crafty are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 12.) Differently to be admonished are the simple and the insincere. The simple are to be praised for studying never to say what is false, but to be admonished to know how sometimes to be silent about what is true. For, as falsehood has always harmed him that speaks it, so sometimes the hearing of truth has done harm to some. Wherefore the Lord before His disciples, tempering His speech with silence, says, *I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now* John 16:12. The simple are therefore to be admonished that, as they always avoid deceit advantageously, so they should always utter truth advantageously. They are to be admonished to add prudence to the goodness of simplicity, to the end that they may so possess the security of simplicity as not to lose the circumspection of prudence. For hence it is said by the teacher of the Gentiles, *I would have you wise in that which is good, but simple concerning evil* Romans 16:19. Hence the Truth in person admonishes His elect, saying, *Be wise as serpents, but simple as doves* Matthew 10:16; because, to wit, in the hearts of the elect the wisdom of the serpent ought to sharpen the simplicity of the dove and the simplicity of the dove temper the wisdom of the serpent, to the end that neither through prudence they be seduced into cunning, nor from simplicity grow torpid in the exercise of the understanding.

But, on the other hand, the insincere are to be admonished to learn how heavy is the labour of duplicity, which with guilt they endure. For, while they are afraid of being found out, they are ever seeking dishonest defences, they are agitated by fearful suspicions. But there is nothing safer for defence than sincerity, nothing easier to say than truth. For, when obliged to defend its deceit, the heart is wearied with hard labour. For hence it is written, *The labour of their own lips shall cover them* Psalm 139:10. For what now fills them then covers them, since it then presses down with sharp retribution him whose soul it now elevates with a mild disquietude. Hence it is said through Jeremiah, *They have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary*

themselves to commit iniquity Jeremiah 9:5: as if it were said plainly, They who might have been friends of truth without labour, labour to sin; and, while they refuse to live in simplicity, by labours require that they should die. For commonly, when taken in a fault, while they shrink from being known to be such as they are, they hide themselves under a veil of deceit, and endeavour to excuse their sin, which is already plainly perceived; so that often one who has a care to reprove their faults, led astray by the mists of the falsehood that surrounds them, finds himself to have almost lost what he just now held as certain concerning them. Hence it is rightly said through the prophet, under the similitude of Judah, to the soul that sins and excuses itself, *There the urchin had her nest* Isaiah 34:15. For by the name of urchin is denoted the duplicity of a mind that is insincere, and cunningly defends itself; because, to wit, when an urchin is caught, its head is perceived, and its feet appear, and its whole body is exposed to view; but no sooner has it been caught than it gathers itself into a ball, draws in its feet, hides its head, and all is lost together within the hands of him that holds it which before was all visible together. So assuredly, so insincere minds are, when they are seized hold of in their transgressions. For the head of the urchin is perceived, because it appears from what beginning the sinner has advanced to his crime; the feet of the urchin are seen, because it is discovered by what steps the iniquity has been perpetrated; and yet by suddenly adducing excuses the insincere mind gathers in its feet, in that it hides all traces of its iniquity; it draws in the head, because by strange defences it makes out that it has not even begun any evil; and it remains as it were a ball in the hand of one that holds it, because one that takes it to task, suddenly losing all that he had just now come to the knowledge of, holds the sinner rolled up within his own consciousness, and, though he had seen the whole of him when he was caught, yet, illuded by the tergiversation of dishonest defence, he is in like measure ignorant of the whole of him. Thus the urchin has her nest in the reprobate, because the duplicity of a crafty mind, gathering itself up within itself, hides itself in the darkness of its self-defence.

Let the insincere hear what is written, *He that walks in simplicity walks surely* Proverbs 10:9. For indeed simplicity of conduct is an assurance of great security. Let them hear what is said by the mouth

of the wise man, *The holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit* Wisdom 1:5. Let them hear what is again affirmed by the witness of Scripture, *His communing is with the simple* Proverbs 3:32. For God's communing is His revealing of secrets to human minds by the illumination of His presence. He is therefore said to commune with the simple, because He illuminates with the ray of His visitation concerning supernal mysteries the minds of those whom no shade of duplicity obscures. But it is a special evil of the double-minded, that, while they deceive others by their crooked and double conduct, they glory as though they were surpassingly prudent beyond others; and, since they consider not the strictness of retribution, they exult, miserable men that they are, in their own losses. But let them hear how the prophet Zephaniah holds out over them the power of divine rebuke, saying, *Behold the day of the Lord comes, great and horrible, the day of wrath, that day; a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of cloud and whirlwind, a day of trumpet and clangour, upon all fenced cities, and upon all lofty corners* Zephaniah 1:15-16. For what is expressed by fenced cities but minds suspected, and surrounded ever with a fallacious defence; minds which, as often as their fault is attacked, suffer not the darts of truth to reach them? And what is signified by lofty corners (a wall being always double in corners) but insincere hearts; which, while they shun the simplicity of truth, are in a manner doubled back upon themselves in the crookedness of duplicity, and, what is worse, from their very fault of insincerity lift themselves in their thoughts with the pride of prudence? Therefore the day of the Lord comes full of vengeance and rebuke upon fenced cities and upon lofty corners, because the wrath of the last judgment both destroys human hearts that have been closed by defences against the truth, and unfolds such as have been folded up in duplicities. For then the fenced cities fall, because souls which God has not penetrated will be damned. Then the lofty corners tumble, because hearts which erect themselves in the prudence of insincerity are prostrated by the sentence of righteousness.

Chapter 12

How the whole and the sick are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 13.) Differently to be admonished are the whole and the sick. For the whole are to be admonished that they employ the health of the body to the health of the soul: lest, if they turn the grace of granted soundness to the use of iniquity, they be made worse by the gift, and afterwards merit the severer punishments, in that they fear not now to use amiss the more bountiful gifts of God . The whole are to be admonished that they despise not the opportunity of winning health for ever. For it is written, *Behold now is the acceptable time, behold now is the day of salvation* 2 Corinthians 6:2. They are to be admonished lest, if they will not please God when they may, they may be not able when, too late, they would. For hence it is that Wisdom afterward deserts those whom, too long refusing, she before called, saying, *I have called, and you refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; you have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I will also laugh at your destruction, and will mock when what you feared comes* Proverbs 1:24, *seq.*. And again, *Then shall they call upon me, and I will not hearken; they shall rise early, and shall not find me* Proverbs 1:28. And so, when health of body, received for the purpose of doing good, is despised, it is felt, after it is lost, how precious was the gift: and at the last it is fruitlessly sought, having been enjoyed unprofitably when granted at the fit time. Whence it is well said through Solomon, *Give not your honour unto aliens and your years unto the cruel, lest haply strangers be filled with your wealth, and your labours be in the house of a stranger, and you moan at the last, when your flesh and your body are consumed* Proverbs 5:9, *seq.*. For who are aliens from us but malignant spirits, who are separated from the lot of the heavenly country? And what is our honour but that, though made in bodies of clay, we are yet created after the image and likeness of our Maker? Or who else is cruel but that apostate angel, who has both smitten himself with the pain of death through pride, and has not spared, though lost, to bring death upon the human race? He therefore gives his honour unto aliens who, being made after the image and likeness

of God, devotes the seasons of his life to the pleasures of malignant spirits. He also surrenders his years to the cruel one who spends the space of life accorded him after the will of the ill-domineering adversary. And in the same place it is well added, *Lest haply strangers be filled with your wealth, and labours be in the house of a stranger*. For whosoever, through the healthy estate of body received by him, or the wisdom of mind granted to him, labours not in the practice of virtues but in the perpetration of vices, he by no means fills his own house, but the habitations of strangers, with his wealth: that is, he multiplies the deeds of unclean spirits, and indeed so acts, in his luxuriousness or his pride, as even to increase the number of the lost by the addition of himself. Further, it is well added, *And you moan at the last, when your flesh and your body are consumed*. For, for the most part, the health of the flesh which has been received is spent through vices: but, when it is suddenly withdrawn, when the flesh is worn with afflictions, when the soul is already urged to go forth, then lost health, long enjoyed for ill, is sought again as though for living well. And then men moan for that they would not serve God, when altogether unable to repair the losses of their negligence by serving Him. Whence it is said in another place, *When He slew them, then they sought Him* Psalm 77:34.

But, on the other hand, the sick are to be admonished that they feel themselves to be sons of God in that the scourge of discipline chastises them. For, unless He purposed to give them an inheritance after correction, He would not have a care to educate them by afflictions. For hence the Lord says to John by the angel, *Whom I love I rebuke and chasten* Revelation 3:19; Proverbs 3:11. Hence again it is written, *My son despise not the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives* Hebrews 12:5-6. Hence the Psalmist says, *Many are the tribulations of the righteous, and out of all these has the Lord delivered them* Psalm 33:20. Hence also the blessed Job, crying out in his sorrow, says, *If l be righteous, I will not lift up my head, being saturated with affliction and misery* Job 10:15. The sick are to be told that, if they believe the heavenly country to be their own, they must needs endure labours in this as in a strange land. For hence it was that the stones were hammered outside, that they might be laid without sound of hammer in the

building of the temple of the Lord; because, that is, we are now hammered with scourges without, that we may be afterwards set in our places within, without stroke of discipline, in the temple of God; to the end that strokes may now cut away whatever is superfluous in us, and then the concord of charity alone bind us together in the building. The sick are to be admonished to consider what severe scourges of discipline chastise our sons after the flesh for attaining earthly inheritances. What pain, then, of divine correction is hard upon us, by which both a never-to-be-lost inheritance is attained, and punishments which shall endure for ever are avoided? For hence Paul says, *We have had fathers of our flesh as our educators, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much more be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live? And they indeed for a few days educated us after their own will; but He for our profit in the receiving of His sanctification* Hebrews 12:9-10.

The sick are to be admonished to consider how great health of the heart is in bodily affliction, which recalls the mind to knowledge of itself, and renews the memory of infirmity which health for the most part casts away, so that the spirit, which is carried out of itself into elation, may be reminded by the smitten flesh from which it suffers to what condition it is subject. Which thing is rightly signified to Balaam (had he but been willing to follow obediently the voice of God) in the very retardation of his journey *, seq.*. For Balaam is on his way to attain his purpose; but the animal which is under him thwarts his desire. The ass, stopped by the prohibition, sees an angel which the human mind sees not; because for the most part the flesh, slow through afflictions, indicates to the mind from the scourge which it endures the God whom the mind itself which has the flesh under it did not see, in such sort as to impede the eagerness of the spirit which desires to advance in this world as though proceeding on a journey, until it makes known to it the invisible one who stands in its way. Whence also it is well said through Peter, *He had the dumb beast of burden for a rebuke of his madness, which speaking with a man's voice forbade the foolishness of the prophet* 2 Peter 2:16. For indeed a man is rebuked as mad by a dumb beast of burden, when an elated mind is reminded by the afflicted flesh of the good of humility which it ought to retain. But Balaam did not obtain the benefit of this rebuke for this reason, that, going to curse, he changed his voice, but

not his mind. The sick are to be admonished to consider how great a boon is bodily affliction, which both washes away committed sins and restrains those which might have been committed, which inflicts on the troubled mind wounds of penitence derived from outward stripes. Whence it is written, *The blueness of a wound cleanses away evil, and stripes in the secret parts of the belly* Proverbs 20:30. For the blueness of a wound cleanses away evil, because the pain of scourges cleanses iniquities, whether meditated or perpetrated. But by the appellation of belly the mind is wont to be understood. For that the mind is called the belly is taught by that sentence in which it is written, *The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, which searches all the secret parts of the belly* Proverbs 20:27. As if to say, The illumination of Divine inspiration, when it comes into a man's mind, shows it to itself by illuminating it, whereas before the coming of the Holy Spirit it both could entertain bad thoughts and knew not how to estimate them. Then, the blueness of a wound cleanses away evil, and stripes in the secret parts of the belly, because when we are smitten outwardly, we are recalled, silent and afflicted, to memory of our sins, and bring back before our eyes all our past evil deeds, and through what we suffer outwardly we grieve inwardly the more for what we have done. Whence it comes to pass that in the midst of open wounds of the body the secret stripe in the belly cleanses us more fully, because a hidden wound of sorrow heals the iniquities of evil-doing.

The sick are to be admonished, to the end that they may keep the virtue of patience, to consider incessantly how great evils our Redeemer endured from those whom He had created; that He bore so many vile insults of reproach; that, while daily snatching the souls of captives from the hand of the old enemy, He took blows on the face from insulting men; that, while washing us with the water of salvation, He hid not His face from the spittings of the faithless; that, while delivering us by His advocacy from eternal punishments, He bore scourges in silence; that, while giving to us everlasting honours among the choirs of angels, He endured buffets; that, while saving us from the prickings of our sins, He refused not to submit His head to thorns; that, while inebriating us with eternal sweetness, He accepted in His thirst the bitterness of gall; that He Who for us adored the Father though equal to Him in Godhead, when adored in

mockery held His peace: that, while preparing life for the dead, He Who was Himself the life came even unto death. Why, then, is it thought hard that man should endure scourges from God for evil-doing, if God underwent so great evils for well-doing? Or who with sound understanding can be ungrateful for being himself smitten, when even He Who lived here without sin went not hence without a scourge?

Chapter 13

How those who fear scourges and those who contemn them are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 14.) Differently to be admonished are those who fear scourges, and on that account live innocently, and those who have grown so hard in wickedness as not to be corrected even by scourges. For those who fear scourges are to be told by no means to desire temporal goods as being of great account, seeing that bad men also have them, and by no means to shun present evils as intolerable, seeing they are not ignorant how for the most part good men also are touched by them. They are to be admonished that, if they desire to be truly free from evils, they should dread eternal punishments; nor yet continue in this fear of punishments, but grow up by the nursing of charity to the grace of love. For it is written, *Perfect charity casts out fear* 1 John 4:18. And again it is written, *You have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear, but the spirit of adoption of sons, wherein we cry, Abba, Father* Romans 8:15. Whence the same teacher says again, *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* 2 Corinthians 3:17. If, then, the fear of punishment still restrains from evil-doing, truly no liberty of spirit possesses the soul of him that so fears. For, were he not afraid of the punishment, he would doubtless commit the sin. The mind, therefore, that is bound by the bondage of fear knows not the grace of liberty. For good should be loved for itself, not pursued because of the compulsion of penalties. For he that does what is good for this reason, that he is afraid of the evil of torments, wishes that what he fears were not, that so he might commit what is unlawful boldly. Whence it appears clearer than the light that innocence is thus lost before God, in whose eyes evil desire is sin.

But, on the other hand, those whom not even scourges restrain from iniquities are to be smitten with sharper rebuke in proportion as they have grown hard with greater insensibility. For generally they are to be disdained without disdain, and despaired of without despair, so, to wit, that the despair exhibited may strike them with dread, and admonition following may bring them back to hope. Sternly,

therefore, against them should the Divine judgments be set forth, that they may be recalled by consideration of eternal retribution to knowledge of themselves. For let them hear that in them is fulfilled that which is written, *If you should bray a fool in a mortar, as if with a pestle pounding barley, his foolishness will not be taken away from him* Proverbs 27:22. Against these the prophet complains to the Lord, saying, *You have bruised them, and they have refused to receive discipline* Jeremiah 5:3. Hence it is that the Lord says, *I have slain and destroyed this people, and yet they have not returned from their ways* Isaiah 9:13. Hence He says again, *The people has not returned to Him that smites them* Jeremiah 15:6. Hence the prophet complains by the voice of the scourgers, saying, *We have taken care for Babylon, and she is not healed* Jeremiah 51:9. For Babylon is taken care for, yet still not restored to health, when the mind, confused in evil-doing, hears the words of rebuke, feels the scourges of rebuke, and yet scorns to return to the straight paths of salvation. Hence the Lord reproaches the children of Israel, captive, but yet not converted from their iniquity, saying, *The house of Israel is to Me become dross: all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace* Ezekiel 22:18; as if to say plainly, I would have purified them by the fire of tribulation, and I sought that they should become silver or gold; but they have been turned before me in the furnace into brass, tin, iron, and lead, because even in tribulation they have broken forth, not to virtue but to vices. For indeed brass, when it is struck, returns a sound more than all other metals. He, therefore, who, when subjected to strokes, breaks out into a sound of murmuring is turned into brass in the midst of the furnace. But tin, when it is dressed with art, has a false show of silver. He, then, who is not free from the vice of pretence in the midst of tribulation becomes tin in the furnace. Moreover, he who plots against the life of his neighbour uses iron. Wherefore iron in the furnace is he who in tribulation loses not the malice that would do hurt. Lead, also, is the heaviest of metals. He, then, is found as lead in the furnace who, even when placed in the midst of tribulation, is not raised above earthly desires. Hence, again, it is written, *She has wearied herself with much labour, and her exceeding rust went not out from her, not even by fire* Ezekiel 24:12. For He brings upon us the fire of tribulation, that He may purge us from the rust of vices; but we lose not our rust even by fire, when even amid scourges we lack not vice.

Hence the Prophet says again, *The founder has melted in vain; their wickednesses are not consumed* Jeremiah 6:29.

It is, however, to be known that sometimes when they remain uncorrected amid the hardness of scourges, they are to be soothed by sweet admonition. For those who are not corrected by torments are sometimes restrained from unrighteous deeds by gentle blandishments. For commonly the sick too, whom a strong potion of medicine has not availed to cure, have been restored to their former health by tepid water; and some sores which cannot be cured by incision are healed by fomentations of oil; and hard adamant admits not at all of incision by steel, but is softened by the mild blood of goats.

Chapter 14

How the silent and the talkative are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 15.) Differently to be admonished are the over-silent, and those who spend time in much speaking. For it ought to be insinuated to the over-silent that while they shun some vices unadvisedly, they are, without its being perceived, implicated in worse. For often from bridling the tongue overmuch they suffer from more grievous loquacity in the heart; so that thoughts seethe the more in the mind from being straitened by the violent guard of indiscreet silence. And for the most part they overflow all the more widely as they count themselves the more secure because of not being seen by fault-finders without. Whence sometimes a man's mind is exalted into pride, and he despises as weak those whom he hears speaking. And, when he shuts the mouth of his body, he is not aware to what extent through his pride he lays himself open to vices. For his tongue he represses, his mind he exalts; and, little considering his own wickedness, accuses all in his own mind by so much the more freely as he does it also the more secretly. The over-silent are therefore to be admonished that they study anxiously to know, not only what manner of men they ought to exhibit themselves outwardly, but also what manner of men they ought to show themselves inwardly; that they fear more a hidden judgment in respect of their thoughts than the reproof of their neighbours in respect of their speeches. For it is written, *My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow your ear to my prudence, that you may guard your thoughts* Proverbs 5:1. For, indeed, nothing is more fugitive than the heart, which deserts us as often as it slips away through bad thoughts. For hence the Psalmist says, *My heart has failed me* Psalm 39:13. Hence, when he returns to himself, he says, *Your servant has found his heart to pray to You* 2 Samuel 7:27. When, therefore, thought is kept under guard, the heart which was wont to fly away is found. Moreover, the over-silent for the most part, when they suffer some injustices, come to have a keener sense of pain from not speaking of what they endure. For, were the tongue to tell calmly the annoyances that have been caused, the pain would flow away from the

consciousness. For closed sores torment the more; since, when the corruption that is hot within is cast out, the pain is opened out for healing. They, therefore, who are silent more than is expedient, ought to know this, lest, amid the annoyances which they endure while they hold their tongue, they aggravate the violence of their pain. For they are to be admonished that, if they love their neighbours as themselves, they should by no means keep from them the grounds on which they justly blame them. For from the medicine of the voice there is a concurrent effect for the health of both parties, while on the side of him who inflicts the injury his bad conduct is checked, and on the side of him who sustains it the violent heat of pain is allayed by opening out the sore. For those who take notice of what is evil in their neighbours, and yet refrain their tongue in silence, withdraw, as it were, the aid of medicine from observed sores, and become the causers of death, in that they would not cure the venom which they could have cured. The tongue, therefore, should be discreetly curbed, not tied up fast. For it is written, *A wise man will hold his tongue until the time* Ecclesiastes 20:7; in order, assuredly, that, when he considers it opportune, he may relinquish the censorship of silence, and apply himself to the service of utility by speaking such things as are fit. And again it is written, *A time to keep silence, and a time to speak* Ecclesiastes 3:7. For, indeed, the times for changes should be discreetly weighed, lest either, when the tongue ought to be restrained, it run loose to no profit in words, or, when it might speak with profit, it slothfully restrain itself. Considering which thing well, the Psalmist says, *Set a watch, O Lord, on my mouth, and a door round about my lips* Psalm 140:3. For he seeks not that a wall should be set on his lips, but a door: that is, what is opened and shut. Whence we, too, ought to learn warily, to the end that the voice discreetly and at the fitting time may open the mouth, and at the fitting time silence close it.

But, on the other hand, those who spend time in much speaking are to be admonished that they vigilantly note from what a state of rectitude they fall away when they flow abroad in a multitude of words. For the human mind, after the manner of water, when closed in, is collected unto higher levels, in that it seeks again the height from which it descended; and, when let loose, it falls away in that it disperses itself unprofitably through the lowest places. For by as

many superfluous words as it is dissipated from the censorship of its silence, by so many streams, as it were, is it drawn away out of itself. Whence also it is unable to return inwardly to knowledge of itself, because, being scattered by much speaking, it excludes itself from the secret place of inmost consideration. But it uncovers its whole self to the wounds of the enemy who lies in want, because it surrounds itself with no defence of watchfulness. Hence it is written, *As a city that lies open and without environment of walls, so is a man that cannot keep in his spirit in speaking* Proverbs 25:28. For, because it has not the wall of silence, the city of the mind lies open to the darts of the foe; and, when by words it casts itself out of itself, it shows itself exposed to the adversary. And he overcomes it with so much the less labour as with the more labour the mind itself, which is conquered, fights against itself by much speaking.

Moreover, since the indolent mind for the most part lapses by degrees into downfall, while we neglect to guard against idle words we go on to hurtful ones; so that at first it pleases us to talk of other men's affairs; afterwards the tongue gnaws with detraction the lives of those of whom we talk; but at last breaks out even into open slanders. Hence are sown pricking thorns, quarrels arise, the torches of enmities are kindled, the peace of hearts is extinguished. Whence it is well said through Solomon, *He that lets out water is a well-spring of strifes* Proverbs 17:14. For to let out water is to let loose the tongue to a flux of speech. Wherefore, on the other hand, in a good sense it is said again, *The words of a man's mouth are as deep water* Proverbs 18:4. He therefore who lets out water is the wellspring of strifes, because he who curbs not his tongue dissipates concord. Hence on the other hand it is written, *He that imposes silence on a fool allays enmities* Proverbs 26:10. Moreover, that any one who gives himself to much speaking cannot keep the straight way of righteousness is testified by the Prophet, who says, *A man full of words shall not be guided aright upon the earth* Psalm 139:12. Hence also Solomon says again, *In the multitude of words there shall not want sin* Proverbs 10:19. Hence Isaiah says, *The culture of righteousness is silence* Isaiah 32:17, indicating, to wit, that the righteousness of the mind is desolated when there is no stint of immoderate speaking. Hence James says, *If any man thinks himself to be religious, and bridles not his tongue, but deceives his own*

heart, this man's religion is vain James 1:26. Hence again he says, *Let every man be swift to hear, but slow to speak* James 1:19. Hence again, defining the power of the tongue, he adds, *An unruly evil, full of deadly poison* James 3:8. Hence the Truth in person admonishes us, saying, *Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment* Matthew 12:36. For indeed every word is idle that lacks either a reason of just necessity or an intention of pious usefulness. If then an account is required of idle discourse, let us weigh well what punishment awaits much speaking, in which there is also the sin of hurtful words.

Chapter 15

How the slothful and the hasty are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 16.) Differently to be admonished are the slothful and the hasty. For the former are to be persuaded not to lose, by putting it off, the good they have to do; but the latter are to be admonished lest, while they forestall the time of good deeds by inconsiderate haste, they change their meritorious character. To the slothful therefore it is to be intimated, that often, when we will not do at the right time what we can, before long, when we will, we cannot. For the very indolence of the mind, when it is not kindled with befitting fervour, gets cut off by a torpor that stealthily grows upon it from all desire of good things. Whence it is plainly said through Solomon, *Slothfulness casts into a deep sleep* Proverbs 19:15. For the slothful one is as it were awake in that he feels aright, though he grows torpid by doing nothing: but slothfulness is said to cast into a deep sleep, because by degrees even the wakefulness of right feeling is lost, when zeal for well-doing is discontinued. And in the same place it is rightly added, *And a dissolute soul shall suffer hunger* Proverbs 19:15. For, because it braces not itself towards higher things, it lets itself run loose uncared for in lower desires; and, while not braced with the vigour of lofty aims, suffers the pangs of the hunger of low concupiscence, and, in that it neglects to bind itself up by discipline, it scatters itself the more abroad hungry in its craving after pleasures. Hence it is written again by the same Solomon, *The idle man is wholly in desires* Proverbs 21:26. Hence in the preaching of the Truth Himself Matthew 12:44-45 the house is said indeed to be clean when one spirit has gone out; but, when empty, it is taken possession of by his returning with many more. For the most part the slothful, while he neglects to do things that are necessary, sets before him some that are difficult, but is inconsiderately afraid of others; and so, as though finding something that he may reasonably fear, he satisfies himself that he has good reason for remaining torpid. To him it is rightly said through Solomon, *The sluggard would not plough by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in summer, and it shall not be given unto him* Proverbs 20:4. For indeed the sluggard ploughs not

by reason of the cold, when he finds an excuse for not doing the good things which he ought to do. The sluggard ploughs not by reason of the cold, when he is afraid of small evils that are against him, and leaves undone things of the greatest importance. Further it is well said, *He shall beg in summer, and it shall not be given unto him*. For whoso toils not now in good works will beg in summer and receive nothing, because, when the burning sun of judgment shall appear, he will then sue in vain for entrance into the kingdom. To him it is well said again through the same Solomon, *He that observes the wind does not sow: and he that regards the clouds never reaps* Ecclesiastes 11:4. For what is expressed by the wind but the temptation of malignant spirits? And what are denoted by the clouds which are moved of the wind but the oppositions of bad men? The clouds, that is to say, are driven by the winds, because bad men are excited by the blasts of unclean spirits. He, then, that observes the wind sows not, and he that regards the clouds reaps not, because whosoever fears the temptation of malignant spirits, whosoever the persecution of bad men, and does not sow the seed of good work now, neither does he then reap handfuls of holy recompense.

But on the other hand the hasty, while they forestall the time of good deeds, pervert their merit, and often fall into what is evil, while failing altogether to discern what is good. Such persons look not at all to see what things they are doing when they do them, but for the most part, when they are done, become aware that they ought not to have done them. To such, under the guise of a learner, it is well said in Solomon, *My son, do nothing without counsel, and after it is done you shall not repent* Sirach 32:24. And again, *Let your eyelids go before your steps* Proverbs 4:25. For indeed our eyelids go before our steps, when right counsels prevent our doings. For he who neglects to look forward by consideration to what he is about to do advances his steps with his eyes closed; proceeds on and accomplishes his journey, but goes not in advance of himself by looking forward; and therefore the sooner falls, because he gives no heed through the eyelid of counsel to where he should set the foot of action.

Chapter 16

How the meek and the passionate are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 17.) Differently to be admonished are the meek and the passionate. For sometimes the meek, when they are in authority, suffer from the torpor of sloth, which is a kindred disposition, and as it were placed hard by. And for the most part from the laxity of too great gentleness they soften the force of strictness beyond need. But on the other hand the passionate, in that they are swept on into frenzy of mind by the impulse of anger, break up the calm of quietness, and so throw into confusion the life of those that are put under them. For, when rage drives them headlong, they know not what they do in their anger, they know not what in their anger they suffer from themselves. But sometimes, what is more serious, they think the goad of their anger to be the zeal of righteousness. And, when vice is believed to be virtue, guilt is piled up without fear. Often, then, the meek grow torpid in the laziness of inactivity; often the passionate are deceived by the zeal of uprightness. Thus to the virtue of the former a vice is unawares adjoined, but to the latter their vice appears as though it were fervent virtue. Those, therefore, are to be admonished to fly what is close beside themselves, these to take heed to what is in themselves; those to discern what they have not, these what they have. Let the meek embrace solicitude; let the passionate ban perturbation. The meek are to be admonished that they study to have also the zeal of righteousness: the passionate are to be admonished that to the zeal which they think they have they add meekness. For on this account the Holy Spirit has been manifested to us in a dove and in fire; because, to wit, all whom He fills He causes to show themselves as meek with the simplicity of the dove, and burning with the fire of zeal.

He then is in no wise full of the Holy Spirit, who either in the calm of meekness forsakes the fervour of zeal, or again in the ardour of zeal loses the virtue of meekness. Which thing we shall perhaps better show, if we bring forward the authority of Paul, who to two who were his disciples, and endowed with a like charity, supplies nevertheless

different aids for preaching. For in admonishing Timothy he says, *Reprove, entreat, rebuke, with all long-suffering and doctrine* 2 Timothy 4:2. Titus also he admonishes, saying, *These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority* Titus 2:15. What is the reason that he dispenses his teaching with so great art as, in exhibiting it, to recommend authority to the one, and long-suffering to the other, except that he saw Titus to be of a meeker spirit, and Timothy of one a little more fervid? The former he inflames with the earnestness of zeal; the latter he moderates by the gentleness of long-suffering. To the one he adds what is wanting, from the other he subtracts what is overabundant. The one he endeavours to push on with a spur, the other to keep back with a bridle. For the great husbandman who has the Church in charge waters some shoots that they may grow, but prunes others when he sees that they grow too much; lest either by not growing they should bear no fruit, or by growing over much they should lose the fruits they may put forth. But far different is the anger that creeps in under the guise of zeal from that which confounds the perturbed heart without pretext of righteousness. For the former is extended inordinately in that wherein it ought to be, but the latter is ever kindled in that wherein it ought not to be. It should indeed be known that in this the passionate differ from the impatient, that the latter bear not with things brought upon them by others, but the former themselves bring on things to be borne with. For the passionate often follow after those who shun them, stir up occasion of strife, rejoice in the toil of contention; and yet such we better correct, if in the midst of the commotion of their anger we do shun them. For, while they are perturbed, they do not know what we say to them; but, when brought back to themselves, they receive words of exhortation the more freely in proportion as they blush at having been the more calmly borne with. But to a mind that is drunk with fury every right thing that is said appears wrong. Whence to Nabal when he was drunk Abigail laudably kept silence about his fault, but, when he had digested his wine, as laudably told him of it 1 Samuel 25:37. For he could for this reason perceive the evil he had done, that he did not hear of it when drunk.

But when the passionate so attack others that they cannot be altogether shunned, they should be smitten, not with open rebuke, but sparingly with a certain respectful cautiousness. And this we

shall show better if we bring forward what was done by Abner. For, when Asahel attacked him with the violence of inconsiderate haste, it is written, *Abner spoke unto Asahel, saying. Turn you aside from following me, lest I be driven to smite you to the ground. Howbeit he scorned to listen, and refused to turn aside. Whereupon Abner smote him with the hinder end of the spear in the groin, and thrust him through, and he died* 2 Samuel 2:22-23. For of whom did Asahel present a type but of those whom fury violently seizes and carries headlong? And such, in this same attack of fury, are to be shunned cautiously in proportion as they are madly hurried on. Whence also Abner, who in our speech is called the lantern of the father, fled; because when the tongue of teachers, which indicates the supernal light of God, sees the mind of any one borne along over the steeps of rage, and refrains from casting back darts of words against the angry person, it is as though it were unwilling to smite one that is pursuing. But, when the passionate will not pacify themselves by any consideration, and, like Asahel, cease not to pursue and to be mad, it is necessary that those who endeavour to repress these furious ones should by no means lift themselves up in fury, but exhibit all possible calmness; and yet adroitly bring something to bear whereby they may by a side thrust prick the heart of the furious one. Whence also Abner, when he made a stand against his pursuer, pierced him, not with a direct stroke, but with the hinder end of his spear. For to strike with the point is to oppose with an onset of open rebuke: but to smite the pursuer with the hinder end of the spear is calmly to touch the furious one with certain hits, and, as it were, by sparing him overcome him. Asahel moreover straightway fell, because agitated minds, when they feel themselves to be spared, and yet are touched inwardly by the answers given in calmness, fall at once from the elevation to which they had raised themselves. Those, then, who rebound from the onset of their heat under the stroke of gentleness die, as it were, without steel.

Chapter 17

How the humble and the haughty are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 18.) Differently to be admonished are the humble and the haughty. To the former it is to be insinuated how true is that excellence which they hold in hoping for it; to the latter it is to be intimated how that temporal glory is as nothing which even when embracing it they hold not. Let the humble hear how eternal are the things that they long for, how transitory the things which they despise; let the haughty hear how transitory are the things they court, how eternal the things they lose. Let the humble hear from the authoritative voice of the Truth, *Every one that humbles himself shall be exalted* Luke 18:14. Let the haughty hear, *Every one that exalts himself shall be humbled* Luke 18:14. Let the humble hear, *Humility goes before glory;* let the haughty hear, *The spirit is exalted before a fall* Proverbs 15:33; 16:18. Let the humble hear, *Unto whom shall I have respect, but to him that is humble and quiet, and that trembles at my words* Isaiah 66:2? Let the haughty hear, *Why is earth and ashes proud* Sirach 10:9? Let the humble hear, *God has respect unto the things that are humble*. Let the haughty hear, *And lofty things He knows afar off* Psalm 137:6. Let the humble hear, *That the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister* Matthew 20:28; let the haughty hear, that *The beginning of all sin is pride* Sirach 10:13. Let the humble hear, that *Our Redeemer humbled himself, being made obedient even unto death* Philippians 2:8; let the haughty hear what is written concerning their head, *He is king over all the sons of pride* Job 41:25. The pride, therefore, of the devil became the occasion of our perdition, and the humility of God has been found the argument for our redemption. For our enemy, having been created among all things, desired to appear exalted above all things; but our Redeemer, remaining great above all things, deigned to become little among all things.

Let the humble, then, be told that, when they abase themselves, they ascend to the likeness of God; let the haughty be told that, when they exalt themselves, they fall into imitation of the apostate angel. What,

then, is more debased than haughtiness, which, while it stretches itself above itself, is lengthened out beyond the stature of true loftiness? And what is more sublime than humility, which, while it depresses itself to the lowest, conjoins itself to its Maker who remains above the highest? There is, however, another thing in these cases that ought to be carefully considered; that some are often deceived by a false show of humility, while some are beguiled by ignorance of their own haughtiness. For commonly some who think themselves humble have an admixture of fear, such as is not due to men; while an assertion of free speech commonly goes with the haughty. And when any vices require to be rebuked, the former hold their peace out of fear, and yet esteem themselves as being silent out of humility; the latter speak in the impatience of haughtiness, and yet believe themselves to be speaking in the freedom of uprightness. Those the fault of timidity under a show of humility keeps back from rebuking what is wrong; these the unbridled impetuosity of pride, under the image of freedom, impels to rebuke things they ought not, or to rebuke them more than they ought. Whence both the haughty are to be admonished not to be free more than is becoming, and the humble are to be admonished not to be more submissive than is right; lest either the former turn the defence of righteousness into a display of pride, or the latter, while they study more than needs to submit themselves to men, be driven even to pay respect to their vices.

It is, however, to be considered that for the most part we more profitably reprove the haughty, if with our reproofs of them we mingle some balms of praise. For some other good things that are in them should be introduced into our reproofs, or at all events some that might have been, though they are not; and then at last the bad things that displease us should be cut away, when previous allowance of the good things that please us has made their minds favourably disposed to listen. For unbroken horses, too, we first touch with a gentle hand, that we may afterwards subdue them to us even with whips. And the sweetness of honey is added to the bitter cup of medicine, lest the bitterness which is to be of profit for health be felt harsh in the act of tasting; but, while the taste is deceived by sweetness, the deadly humour is expelled by bitterness. In the case, then, of the haughty the first beginnings of our rebuke should be

tempered with an admixture of praise, that, while they admit the commendations which they love, they may accept also the reproofs which they hate.

Moreover, we shall in most cases better persuade the haughty to their profit, if we speak of their improvement as likely to profit us rather than them; if we request their amendment to be bestowed upon us more than on themselves. For haughtiness is easily bent to good, if its bending be believed to be of profit to others also. Whence Moses, who journeyed through the desert under the direction of God and the leading of the cloudy pillar, when he would draw Hobab his kinsman from converse with the Gentile world, and subdue him to the dominion of Almighty God, said, *We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it to you; Come with us, and we will do you good; for the Lord has spoken good concerning Israel. And when the other had replied to him, I will not go with you, but will return to my own land in which I was born; he straightway added, Leave us not, I pray you; for you know in what places we should encamp in the wilderness, and you shall be our guide* *, seq.*. And yet Moses was not straitened in his own mind by ignorance of the way, seeing that acquaintance with Deity had opened out within him the knowledge of prophecy; and the pillar went before him outwardly, while inwardly familiar speech in his sedulous converse with God instructed him concerning all things. But, in truth, as a man of foresight, talking to a haughty hearer, he sought succour that he might give it; he requested a guide on the way, that he might be able to be his guide unto life. Thus he so acted that the proud hearer should become all the more attentive to the voice that persuaded him to better things from being supposed to be necessary, and, in that he believed himself to be his exhorter's guide, he should bow himself to the words of exhortation.

Chapter 18

How the obstinate and the fickle are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 19.) Differently to be admonished are the obstinate and the fickle. The former are to be told that they think more of themselves than they are, and therefore do not acquiesce in the counsels of others: but the latter are to be given to understand that they undervalue and disregard themselves too much, and so are turned aside from their own judgment in successive moments of time. Those are to be told that, unless they esteemed themselves better than the rest of men, they would by no means set less value on the counsels of all than on their own deliberation: these are to be told that, if they at all gave heed to what they are, the breeze of mutability would by no means turn them about through so many sides of variableness. To the former it is said through Paul, *Be not wise in your own conceits* Romans 12:16: but the latter on the other hand should hear this; *Let us not be carried about with every wind of doctrine* Ephesians 4:14. Concerning the former it is said through Solomon, *They shall eat of the fruits of their own way, and be filled with their own devices* Proverbs 1:31; but concerning the latter it is written by him again, *The heart of the foolish will be unlike* Proverbs 15:7. For the heart of the wise is always like itself, because, while it rests in good persuasions, it directs itself constantly in good performance. But the heart of the foolish is unlike, because, while it shows itself various through mutability, it never remains what it was. And since some vices, as out of themselves they generate others, so themselves spring from others, it ought by all means to be understood that we then better wipe these away by our reproofs, when we dry them up from the very fountain of their bitterness. For obstinacy is engendered of pride, and fickleness of levity.

The obstinate are therefore to be admonished, that they acknowledge the haughtiness of their thoughts, and study to vanquish themselves; lest, while they scorn to be overcome by the right advice of others outside themselves, they be held captive within themselves to pride. They are to be admonished to observe wisely how the Son of Man,

Whose will is always one with the Father's, that He may afford us an example of subduing our own will, says, *I seek not my own will, but the will of the Father which has sent me* John 5:30. And, still more to commend the grace of this virtue, He declared beforehand that He would retain the same in the last judgment, saying, *I can of myself do nothing, but as I hear I judge* John 5:30. With what conscience, then, can a man disdain to acquiesce in the will of another, seeing that the Son of God and of Man, when He comes to show forth the glory of his power, testifies that of his own self he does not judge?

But, on the other hand, the fickle are to be admonished to strengthen their mind with gravity. For they then dry up the germs of mutability in themselves when they first cut off from their heart the root of levity; since also a strong fabric is built up when a solid place is first provided whereon to lay the foundation. Unless, then, levity of mind be previously guarded against, inconstancy of the thoughts is by no means conquered. From this Paul declared himself to be free, when he said, *Did I use levity? Or the things that I purpose do I purpose according to the flesh, that with me there should be yea and nay* 2 Corinthians 1:17? As if to say plainly, For this reason I am moved by no breeze of mutability, that I yield not to the vice of levity.

Chapter 19

How those who use food intemperately and those who use it sparingly are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 20.) Differently to be admonished are the gluttonous and the abstinent. For superfluity of speech, levity of conduct, and lechery accompany the former; but the latter often the sin of impatience, and often that of pride. For were it not the case that immoderate loquacity carries away the gluttonous, that rich man who is said to have fared sumptuously every day would not burn more sorely than elsewhere in his tongue, saying, *Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame* Luke 16:24. By these words it is surely shown that in his daily feasting he had frequently sinned by his tongue, seeing that, while burning all over, he demanded to be cooled especially in his tongue. Again, that levity of conduct follows closely upon gluttony sacred authority testifies, when it says, *The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play* Exodus 32:6. For the most part also edacity leads us even to lechery, because, when the belly is distended by repletion, the stings of lust are excited. Whence also to the cunning foe, who opened the sense of the first man by lust for the apple, but bound it in a noose of sin, it is said by the divine voice, *On breast and belly shall you creep* Genesis 3:14; as if it were plainly said to him, In thought and in maw you shall have dominion over human hearts. That lechery follows upon gluttony the prophet testifies, denouncing hidden things while he speaks of open ones, when he says, *The chief of the cooks broke down the walls of Jerusalem* Jeremiah 39:9; 2 Kings 25:10. For the chief of the cooks is the belly, to which the cooks pay observance with great care, that it may itself be delectably filled with viands. But the walls of Jerusalem are the virtues of the soul, elevated to a longing for supernal peace. The chief of the cooks, therefore, throws down the walls of Jerusalem, because, when the belly is distended with gluttony, the virtues of the soul are destroyed through lechery.

On the other hand, were it not that impatience commonly shakes the abstinent out of the bosom of tranquillity, Peter would by no means, when saying, *Supply in your faith virtue, and in your virtue knowledge, and in your knowledge abstinence* 2 Peter 1:5, have straightway vigilantly added, *And in your abstinence patience*. For he foresaw that the patience which he admonished them to have would be wanting to the abstinent. Again, were it not that the sin of pride sometimes pierces through the cogitations of the abstinent, Paul would by no means have said, *Let not him that eats not judge him that eats* Romans 14:3. And again, speaking to others, while glancing at the maxims of such as gloried in the virtue of abstinence, he added, *Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in superstition and humility, and for not sparing of the body, not in any honour for the satisfying of the flesh* Colossians 2:25. Here it is to be noted that the excellent preacher, in his argument, joins a show of humility to superstition, because, when the flesh is worn more than needs by abstinence, humility is displayed outwardly, but on account of this very humility there is grievous pride within. And unless the mind were sometimes puffed up by the virtue of abstinence, the arrogant Pharisee would by no means have studiously numbered this among his great merits, saying, *I fast twice in the week* Luke 18:12.

Thus the gluttonous are to be admonished, that in giving themselves to the enjoyment of dainties they pierce not themselves through with the sword of lechery; and that they perceive how great loquacity, how great levity of mind, lie in wait for them through eating; lest, while they softly serve the belly, they become cruelly bound in the nooses of vice. For by so much the further do we go back from our second parent as by immoderate indulgence, when the hand is stretched out for food, we renew the fall of our first parent. But, on the other hand, the abstinent are to be admonished ever anxiously to look out, lest, while they fly the vice of gluttony, still worse vices be engendered as it were of virtue lest, while they macerate the flesh, their spirit break out into impatience; and so there be no virtue in the vanquishing of the flesh, the spirit being overcome by anger. Sometimes, moreover, while the mind of the abstinent keeps anger down, it is corrupted, as it were, by a foreign joy coming in, and loses all the good of abstinence in that it fails to guard itself from spiritual vices. Hence it is rightly said through the prophet, *In the days of your fasts are*

found your wills Isaiah 58:3, Septuagint. And shortly after, *You fast for debates and strifes, and you smite with the fists* Isaiah 58:3. For the will pertains to delight, the fist to anger. In vain, then, is the body worn by abstinence, if the mind, abandoned to disorderly emotions, is dissipated by vices. And again, they are to be admonished that, while they keep up their abstinence without abatement, they suppose not this to be of eminent virtue before the hidden judge; lest, if it be perchance supposed to be of great merit, the heart be lifted up to haughtiness. For hence it is said through the prophet, *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? But break your bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the wanderers into your house* Isaiah 58:5.

In this matter it is to be considered how small the virtue of abstinence is accounted, seeing that it is not commended but for other virtues. Hence Joel says, *Sanctify a fast*. For indeed to sanctify a fast is to show abstinence of the flesh to be worthy of God by other good things being added to it. The abstinent are to be admonished that they then offer to God an abstinence that pleases Him, when they bestow on the indigent the nourishment which they withhold from themselves. For we should wisely attend to what is blamed by the Lord through the prophet, saying, *When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh month far these seventy years, did you at all fast a fast unto Me? And when you ate and drank, did you not eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves* Zechariah 7:5 *seq*? For a man fasts not to God but to himself, if what he withholds from his belly for a time he gives not to the needy, but keeps to be offered afterwards to his belly.

Wherefore, lest either gluttonous appetite throw the one sort off their guard, or the afflicted flesh trip up the other by elation, let the former hear this from the mouth of the Truth, *And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged in surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this world* Luke 21:34. And in the same place there is added a profitable fear; *And so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth* Luke 21:35. Let the latter hear, *Not that which goes into the mouth defiles a man; but that which comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man* Matthew 15:11. Let the former hear, *Meat for the belly, and the belly far meats; but God shall destroy both it and*

them 1 Corinthians 6:13. And again, *Not in rioting and drunkenness* Romans 13:13. And again, *Meat commends us not to God* 1 Corinthians 8:8. Let the latter hear, *To the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure* Titus 1:15. Let the former hear, *Whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their own confusion* Philippians 3:19. Let the latter hear, *Some shall depart from the faith;* and a little after, *Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth* 1 Timothy 4:1-3. Let those hear, *It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby your brother stumbles* Romans 14:21. Let these hear, *Use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your often infirmities* 1 Timothy 5:23. Thus both the former may learn not to desire inordinately the food of the flesh, and the latter not dare to condemn the creature of God, which they lust not after.

Chapter 20

How to be admonished are those who give away what is their own, and those who seize what belongs to others.

(*Admonition* 21.) Differently to be admonished are those who already give compassionately of their own, and those who still would fain seize even what belongs to others. For those who already give compassionately of their own are to be admonished not to lift themselves up in swelling thought above those to whom they impart earthly things; not to esteem themselves better than others because they see others to be supported by them. For the Lord of an earthly household, in distributing the ranks and ministries of his servants, appoints some to rule, but some to be ruled by others. Those he orders to supply to the rest what is necessary, these to take what they receive from others. And yet it is for the most part those that rule who offend, while those that are ruled remain in favour with the good man of the house. Those who are dispensers incur wrath; those who subsist by the dispensation of others continue without offense. Those, then, who already give compassionately of the things which they possess are to be admonished to acknowledge themselves to be placed by the heavenly Lord as dispensers of temporal supplies, and to impart the same all the more humbly from their understanding that the things which they dispense are not their own. And, when they consider that they are appointed for the service of those to whom they impart what they have received, by no means let vain glory elate their minds, but let fear depress them. Whence also it is needful for them to take anxious thought lest they distribute what has been committed to them unworthily; lest they bestow something on those on whom they ought to have spent nothing, or nothing on those on whom they ought to have spent something, or much on those on whom they ought to have spent little, or little on those on whom they ought to have spent much; lest by precipitancy they scatter unprofitably what they give; lest by tardiness they mischievously torment petitioners; lest the thought of receiving a favour in return creep in; lest craving for transitory praise extinguish the light of giving; lest accompanying moroseness beset an offered

gift; lest in case of a gift that has been well offered the mind be exhilarated more than is fit; lest, when they have fulfilled all aright, they give something to themselves, and so at once lose all after they have accomplished all. For, that they may not attribute to themselves the virtue of their liberality, let them hear what is written, *If any man administer, let him do it as of the ability which God administers* 1 Peter 4:11. That they may not rejoice immoderately in benefits bestowed, let them hear what is written, *When you shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do* Luke 17:10. That moroseness may not spoil liberality, let them hear what is written, *God loves a cheerful giver* 2 Corinthians 9:7. That they may not seek transitory praise for a gift bestowed, let them hear what is written, *Let not your left hand know what your right hand does* Matthew 6:3. That is, let not the glory of the present life mix itself with the largesses of piety, nor let desire of favour know anything of the work of rectitude. That they may not require a return for benefits bestowed, let them hear what is written, *When you make a dinner or a supper, call not your friends, nor your brethren, neither your kinsmen, nor your rich neighbours, lest they also bid you again, and a recompense be made you. but, when you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and you shall be blessed; for they have not whereof to recompense you* Luke 14:12 *seq.*. That they may not supply too late what should be supplied at once, let them hear what is written, *Say not unto your friend, go and come again, and tomorrow I will give, when you might give immediately* Proverbs 3:28. Lest, under pretence of liberality, they should scatter what they possess unprofitably, let them hear what is written, *Let your alms sweat in your hand*. Lest, when much is necessary, little be given, let them hear what is written, *He that sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly* 2 Corinthians 9:6. Lest, when they ought to give little, they give too much, and afterwards, badly enduring want themselves, break out into impatience, let them hear what is written, *Not that other men be eased, and you burdened, but by an equality, that your abundance may supply their want, and that their abundance may be a supply to your want* (Ibid. 8:13-14). For, when the soul of the giver knows not how to endure want, then, in withdrawing much from himself, he seeks out against himself occasion of impatience. For the mind should first be prepared for patience, and then either

much or all be bestowed in bounty, lest, the inroad of want being borne with but little equanimity, both the reward of previous bounty be lost, and subsequent murmuring bring worse ruin on the soul. Lest they should give nothing at all to those on whom they ought to bestow something, let them hear what is written, *Give to every man that asks of you* Luke 6:30. Lest they should give something, however little to those on whom they ought to bestow nothing at all, let them hear what is written, *Give to the good man, and receive not a sinner: do well to him that is lowly, and give not to the ungodly* Sirach 12:4. And again, *Set out your bread and wine on the burial of the just, but eat and drink not thereof with sinners* Tobit 4:17.

For he gives his bread and wine to sinners who gives assistance to the wicked for that they are wicked. For which cause also some of the rich of this world nourish players with profuse bounties, while the poor of Christ are tormented with hunger. He, however, who gives his bread to one that is indigent, though he be a sinner, not because he is a sinner, but because he is a man, does not in truth nourish a sinner, but a poor righteous man, because what he loves in him is not his sin, but his nature.

Those who already distribute compassionately what they possess are to be admonished also that they study to keep careful guard, lest, when they redeem by alms the sins they have committed, they commit others which will still require redemption; lest they suppose the righteousness of God to be saleable, thinking that if they take care to give money for their sins, they can sin with impunity. For, *The soul is more than meat, and the body than raiment* Matthew 6:25; Luke 12:23. He, therefore, who bestows meat or raiment on the poor, and yet is polluted by iniquity of soul or body, has offered the lesser thing to righteousness, and the greater thing to sin; for he has given his possessions to God, and himself to the devil.

But, on the other hand, those who still would fain seize what belongs to others are to be admonished to give anxious heed to what the Lord says when He comes to judgment. For He says, *I was an hungered, and you gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and you gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and you took Me not in: naked, and you clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and you visited Me not* Matthew

25:42-43. And these he previously addresses saying, *Depart from Me, you cursed, into eternal fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels* Matthew 25:41. Lo, they are in no wise told that they have committed robberies or any other acts of violence, and yet they are given over to the eternal fires of Gehenna. Hence, then, it is to be gathered with how great damnation those will be visited who seize what is not their own, if those who have indiscreetly kept their own are smitten with so great punishment. Let them consider in what guilt the seizing of goods must bind them, if not parting with them subjects to such a penalty. Let them consider what injustice inflicted must deserve, if kindness not bestowed is worthy of so great a chastisement.

When they are intent on seizing what is not their own, let them hear what is written, *Woe to him that increases that which is not his! How long does he heap up against himself thick clay* Habakkuk 2:6? For, indeed, for a covetous man to heap up against him thick clay is to pile up earthly gains into a load of sin. When they desire to enlarge greatly the spaces of their habitation, let them hear what is written, *Woe unto you that join house to house and lay field to field, even till there be no place left. What, will you dwell alone in the midst of the earth* Isaiah 5:8? As if to say plainly, How far do stretch yourselves, you that cannot bear to have comrades in a common world? Those that are joined to you ye keep down, and ever find some against whom you may have power to stretch yourselves. When they are intent on increasing money, let them hear what is written, *The covetous man is not filled with money; and he that loves riches shall not reap fruit thereof* Ecclesiastes 5:9. For indeed he would reap fruit of them, were he minded, not loving them, to disperse them well. But whoso in his affection for them retains them, shall surely leave them behind him here without fruit. When they burn to be filled at once with all manner of wealth, let them hear what is written, *He that makes haste to be rich shall not be innocent* Proverbs 28:20: for certainly he who goes about to increase wealth is negligent in avoiding sin; and, being caught after the manner of birds, while looking greedily at the bait of earthly things, he is not aware in what a noose of sin he is being strangled. When they desire any gains of the present world, and are ignorant of the losses they will suffer in the world to come, let them hear what is written, *An inheritance to*

which haste is made in the beginning in the last end shall lack blessing Proverbs 20:21. For indeed we derive our beginning from this life, that we may come in the end to the lot of blessing. They, therefore, that make haste to an inheritance in the beginning cut off from themselves the lot of blessing in the end; since, while they crave to be increased in goods here through the iniquity of avarice, they become disinherited there of their eternal patrimony. When they either solicit very much, or succeed in obtaining all that they have solicited, let them hear what is written. *What is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world, but lose his own soul* Matthew 16:26? As if the Truth said plainly, What is a man profited, though he gather together all that is outside himself, if this very thing only which is himself he damns? But for the most part the covetousness of spoilers is the sooner corrected, if it be shown by the words of such as admonish them how fleeting is the present life; if mention be made of those who have long endeavoured to grow rich in this world, and yet have been unable to remain long among their acquired riches; from whom hasty death has taken away suddenly and all at once whatever, neither all at once nor suddenly, they have gathered together; who have not only left here what they had seized, but have carried with them to the judgment arraignments for seizure. Let them, therefore, be told of examples of such as these, whom they would, doubtless, even themselves, in words condemn; so that, when after their words they come back to their own heart, they may blush at any rate to imitate those whom they judge.

Chapter 21

How those are to be admonished who desire not the things of others, but keep their own; and those who give of their own, yet seize on those of others.

(*Admonition* 22.) Differently to be admonished are those who neither desire what belongs to others nor bestow what is their own, and those who give of what they have, and yet desist not from seizing on what belongs to others. Those who neither desire what belongs to others nor bestow what is their own are to be admonished to consider carefully that the earth out of which they are taken is common to all men, and therefore brings forth nourishment for all in common. Vainly, then, do those suppose themselves innocent, who claim to their own private use the common gift of God; those who, in not imparting what they have received, walk in the midst of the slaughter of their neighbours; since they almost daily slay so many persons as there are dying poor whose subsidies they keep close in their own possession. For, when we administer necessaries of any kind to the indigent, we do not bestow our own, but render them what is theirs; we rather pay a debt of justice than accomplish works of mercy. Whence also the Truth himself, when speaking of the caution required in showing mercy, says, Take heed that you do not your justice before men Matthew 6:1. The Psalmist also, in agreement with this sentence, says, He has dispersed, he has given to the poor, his justice endures for ever Psalm 112:9.

For, having first mentioned bounty bestowed upon the poor, he would not call this mercy, but rather justice: for it is surely just that whosoever receive what is given by a common Lord should use it in common. Hence also Solomon says, Whoso is just will give and will not spare Proverbs 21:26. They are to be admonished also anxiously to take note how of the fig-tree that had no fruit the rigorous husbandman complains that it even cumbers the ground.

For a fig-tree without fruit cumbers the ground, when the soul of the niggardly keeps unprofitably what might have benefited many. A fig-

tree without fruit cumbers the ground, when the fool keeps barren under the shade of sloth a place which another might have cultivated under the sun of good works.

But these are wont sometimes to say, We use what has been granted us; we do not seek what belongs to others; and, if we do nothing worthy of the reward of mercy, we still commit no wrong. So they think, because in truth they close the ear of their heart to the words which are from heaven. For the rich man in the Gospel who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day, is not said to have seized what belonged to others, but to have used what was his own unfruitfully; and avenging hell received him after this life, not because he did anything unlawful but because by immoderate indulgence he gave up his whole self to what was lawful.

The niggardly are to be admonished to take notice that they do God, in the first place, this wrong; that to Him Who gives them all they render in return no sacrifice of mercy. For hence the Psalmist says. *He will not give his propitiation to God, nor the price of the redemption of his soul* Psalm 48:9. For to give the price of redemption is to return good deeds for preventing grace. Hence John cries aloud saying, *Now the axe is laid unto the root of the tree. Every tree which brings not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire* Luke 3:9. Let those, therefore, who esteem themselves guiltless because they do not seize on what belongs to others look forward to the stroke of the axe that is near at hand, and lay aside the torpor of improvident security, lest, while they neglect to bear the fruit of good deeds, they be cut off from the present life utterly, as it were from the greenness of the root.

But, on the other hand, those who both give what they have and desist not from seizing on what belongs to others are to be admonished not to desire to appear exceeding munificent, and so be made worse from the outward show of good. For these, giving what is their own without discretion, not only, as we have said above, fall into the murmuring of impatience, but, when want urges them, are swept along even to avarice. What, then, is more wretched than the mind of those in whom avarice is born of bountifulness, and a crop of sins is sown as it were from virtue? First, then, they are to be

admonished to learn how to keep what is theirs reasonably, and then in the end not to go about getting what is another's. For, if the root of the fault is not burnt out in the profusion itself, the thorn of avarice, exuberant through the branches, is never dried up. So then, cause for seizing is withdrawn, if the right of possession be first adjusted well. But then, further, let those who are admonished be told how to give mercifully what they have, when they have learned not to confound the good of mercy by throwing into it the wickedness of robbery. For they violently exact what they mercifully bestow. For it is one thing to show mercy on account of our sins; another thing to sin on account of showing mercy; which can no longer indeed be called mercy, since it cannot grow into sweet fruit, being embittered by the poison of its pestiferous root. For hence it is that the Lord through the prophet rejects even sacrifices themselves, saying, *I the Lord love judgment, and I hate robbery in a whole burnt offering* Isaiah 61:8. Hence again He has said, *The sacrifices of the ungodly are abominable, which are offered of wickedness* Proverbs 21:28. Such persons also often withdraw from the indigent what they give to God .

But the Lord shows with what strong censure he disowns them, saying through a certain wise man, *Whoso offers a sacrifice of the substance of the poor does as one that kills the son before the father's eyes* Sirach 34:20. For what can be more intolerable than the death of a son before his father's eyes? Wherefore it is shown with what great wrath this kind of sacrifice is beheld, in that it is compared to the grief of a bereaved father. And yet for the most part people weigh well how much they give; but how much they seize they neglect to consider. They count, as it were, their wage, but refuse to consider their defaults. Let them hear therefore what is written, *He that has gathered wages has put them into a bag with holes* Haggai 1:6. For indeed money put into a bag with holes is seen when it is put in, but when it is lost it is not seen. Those, then, who have an eye to how much they bestow, but consider not how much they seize, put their wages into a bag with holes, because in truth they look to them when they gather them together in hope of being secure, but lose them without looking.

Chapter 22

How those that are at variance and those that are at peace are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 23.) Differently to be admonished are those that are at variance and those that are at peace. For those that are at variance are to be admonished to know most certainly that, in whatever virtues they may abound, they can by no means become spiritual if they neglect becoming united to their neighbours by concord. For it is written, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace* Galatians 5:22. He then that has no care to keep peace refuses to bear the fruit of the Spirit. Hence Paul says, *Whereas there is among you envying and strife, are you not carnal* 1 Corinthians 3:3? Hence again he says also, *Follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord* Hebrews 12:14. Hence again he admonishes, saying, *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: there is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling* Ephesians 4:3-4. The one hope of our calling, therefore, is never reached, if we run not to it with a mind at one with our neighbours. But it is often the case that some, by being proud of some gifts that they especially partake of, lose the greater gift of concord; as it may be if one who subdues the flesh more than others by bridling of his appetite should scorn to be in concord with those whom he surpasses in abstinence. But whoso separates abstinence from concord, let him consider the admonition of the Psalmist, *Praise him with timbrel and chorus* Psalm 150:4. For in the timbrel a dry and beaten skin resounds, but in the chorus voices are associated in concord. Whosoever then afflicts his body, but forsakes concord, praises God indeed with timbrel, but praises Him not with chorus. Often, however, when superior knowledge lifts up some, it disjoins them from the society of other men; and it is as though the more wise they are, the less wise are they as to the virtue of concord. Let these therefore hear what the Truth in person says, *Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another* Mark 9:50. For indeed salt without peace is not a gift of virtue, but an argument for condemnation. For the better any man is in wisdom, the worse is his

delinquency, and he will deserve punishment inexcusably for this very reason, that, if he had been so minded, he might in his prudence have avoided sin. To such it is rightly said through James, *But if you have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable* James 3:14-17. Pure, that is to say, because its ideas are chaste; and also peaceable, because it in no wise through elation disjoins itself from the society of neighbours. Those who are at variance are to be admonished to take note that they offer to God no sacrifice of good work so long as they are not in charity with their neighbours. For it is written, *If you bring your gift to the altar, and there rememberest that your brother has ought against you, leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way first to be reconciled to your brother, and then you shall come and offer your gift* Matthew 5:23-24. Now by this precept we are led to consider how intolerable the guilt of men is shown to be when their sacrifice is rejected. For, whereas all evils are washed away when followed by what is good, let us consider how great must be the evils of discord, seeing that, unless they are utterly extinguished, they allow no good to follow. Those who are at variance are to be admonished that, if they incline not their ears to heavenly commands, they should open the eyes of the mind to consider the ways of creatures of the lowest order; how that often birds of one and the same kind desert not one another in their social flight, and that brute beasts feed in herds together. Thus, if we observe wisely, irrational nature shows by agreeing together how great evil rational nature commits by disagreement; when the latter has lost by the exercise of reason what the former by natural instinct keeps. But, on the other hand, those that are at peace are to be admonished to take heed lest, while they love more than they need do the peace which they enjoy, they have no longing to reach that which is perpetual. For commonly tranquil circumstances more sorely try the bent of minds, so that, in proportion as the things which occupy them are not troublesome, the things which invite them come to appear less lovely, and the more present things delight, eternal things are the less sought after. Whence also the Truth speaking in person, when He would distinguish earthly from supernal peace, and provoke His disciples from that which now is to that which is to come, said, *Peace I leave*

with you, My peace I give unto you John 14:27. That is, I leave a transitory, I give a lasting peace. If then the heart is fixed on that which is left, that which is to be given is never reached. Present peace, therefore, is to be held as something to be both loved and thought little of, lest, if it is loved immoderately, the mind of him that loves be taken in a fault. Whence also those who are at peace should be admonished lest, while too desirous of human peace, they fail entirely to reprove men's evil ways, and, in consenting to the froward, disjoin themselves from the peace of their Maker; lest, while they dread human quarrels without, they be smitten by breach of their inward covenant. For what is transitory peace but a certain footprint of peace eternal? What, then, can be more mad than to love footprints impressed on dust, but not to love him by whom they have been impressed? Hence David, when he would bind himself entirely to the covenants of inward peace, testifies that he held no agreement with the wicked, saying, *Did not I hate them, O God, that hate you, and waste away on account of your enemies? I hated them with perfect hatred, they became enemies to me* Psalm 138:21-22. For to hate God's enemies with perfect hatred is both to love what they were made, and to chide what they do, to be severe on the manners of the wicked, and to profit their life. It is therefore to be well weighed, when there is rest from chiding, how culpably peace is kept with the worst of men, if so great a prophet offered this as a sacrifice to God, that he excited the enmities of the wicked against himself for the Lord . Hence it is that the tribe of Levi, when they took their swords and passed through the midst of the camp because they would not spare the sinners who were to be smitten, are said to have consecrated their hands to God Exodus 32:27, *seq*. Hence Phinehas, spurning the favour of his fellow-countrymen when they sinned, smote those who came together with the Midianites, and in his wrath appeased the wrath of God . Hence in person the Truth says, *Think not that I have come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword* Matthew 10:34. For, when we are unwarily joined in friendship with the wicked, we are bound in their sins. Whence Jehoshaphat, who is extolled by so many praises of his previous life, is rebuked for his friendship with King Ahab as though near unto destruction, when it is said to him through the prophet, *You give help to the ungodly, and art joined in friendship with them that hate the Lord; and therefore you deserved indeed the wrath of the Lord:*

nevertheless there are good works found in you, in that you have taken away the graves out of the land of Judah 2 Chronicles 19:2-3. For our life is already at variance with Him who is supremely righteous by the very fact of agreement in the friendships of the froward. Those who are at peace are to be admonished not to be afraid of disturbing their temporal peace, if they break forth into words of rebuke. And again they are to be admonished to keep inwardly with undiminished love the same peace which in their external relations they disturb by their reproving voice. Both which things David declares that he had prudently observed, saying, *With them that hate peace I was peaceable; when I spoke unto them, they fought against me without a cause* Psalm 119:7. Lo, when he spoke, he was fought against; and yet, when fought against, he was peaceable, because he neither ceased to reprove those that were mad against him, nor forgot to love those who were reproved. Hence also Paul says, *If it be possible, as much as lies in you, have peace with all men* Romans 12:18. For, being about to exhort his disciples to have peace with all, he said first, *If it be possible*, and added, *As much as lies in you*. For indeed it was difficult for them, if they rebuked evil deeds, to be able to have peace with all. But, when temporal peace is disturbed in the hearts of bad men through our rebuke, it is necessary that it should be kept inviolate in our own heart. Rightly, therefore, says he, *As much as lies in you*. It is indeed as though he said, Since peace stands in the consent of two parties, if it is driven out by those who are reproved, let it nevertheless be retained undiminished in the mind of you who reprove. Whence the same apostle again admonishes his disciples, saying, *If any man obey not our word, note that man by this epistle; and have no company with him, that he may be confounded* 2 Thessalonians 3:14. And straightway he added, *Yet count him not as an enemy, but reprove him as a brother* 2 Thessalonians 3:15. As if to say, Break outward peace with him, but guard in your heart's core internal peace concerning him; that your discord with him may so smite the mind of the sinner that peace depart not from your hearts even though denied to him.

Chapter 23

How sowers of strifes and peacemakers are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 24.) Differently to be admonished are sowers of strifes and peacemakers. For sowers of strifes are to be admonished to perceive whose followers they are. For of the apostate angel it is written, when tares had been sown among the good crop, *An enemy has done this* Matthew 13:28. Of a member of him also it is said through Solomon, *An apostate person, an unprofitable man, walks with a perverse mouth, he winks with his eyes, he beats with his foot, he speaks with his finger, with froward heart he devises mischief continually, he sows strifes* Proverbs 6:12-14. Lo, him whom he would speak of as a sower of strifes he first named an apostate; since, unless after the manner of the proud angel he first fell away inwardly by the alienation of his mind from the face of his Maker, he would not afterwards come to sow strifes outwardly. He is rightly described too as winking with his eyes, speaking with his finger, beating with his foot. For it is inward watch that keeps the members outwardly in orderly control. He, then, who has lost stability of mind falls off outwardly into inconstancy of movement, and by his exterior mobility shows that he is stayed on no root within. Let sowers of strifes hear what is written, *Blessed are the peacemakers, far they shall be called the children of God* Matthew 5:9. And on the other hand let them gather that, if they who make peace are called the children of God, without doubt those who confound it are the children of Satan. Moreover, all who are separated by discord from the greenness of loving-kindness are dried up: and, though they bring forth in their actions fruits of well-doing, yet there are in truth no fruits, because they spring not from the unity of charity. Hence, therefore, let sowers of strifes consider how manifoldly they sin; in that, while they perpetrate one iniquity, they eradicate at the same time all virtues from human hearts. For in one evil they work innumerable evils, since, in sowing discord, they extinguish charity, which is in truth the mother of all virtues. But, since nothing is more precious with God than the virtue of loving-kindness, nothing is

more acceptable to the devil than the extinction of charity. Whosoever, then, by sowing of strifes destroy the loving-kindness of neighbours, serve God's enemy as his familiar friend; because by taking away from them this, by the loss of which he fell, they have cut off from them the road whereby to rise.

But, on the other hand, the peacemakers are to be admonished that they detract not from the efficacy of so great an undertaking through not knowing between whom they ought to establish peace. For, as there is much harm if unity be wanting to the good, so there is exceeding harm if it be not wanting to the bad. If, then, the iniquity of the perverse is united in peace, assuredly there is an accession of strength to their evil doings, since the more they agree among themselves in wickedness, by so much the more stoutly do they dash themselves against the good to afflict them. For hence it is that against the preachers of that vessel of damnation, to wit, Antichrist, is it said by the divine voice to the blessed Job, *The members of his flesh stick close to each other* Job 41:14. Hence, under the figure of scales, it is said of his satellites, *One is joined to another, and not even a breathing-hole comes between them* Job 41:7. For, indeed, his followers, from being divided by no opposition of discord among themselves, are by so much the more strongly banded together in the slaughter of the good. He then who associates the iniquitous together in peace supplies strength to iniquity, since they worse press down the good, whom they persecute unanimously. Whence the excellent preacher, being overtaken by violent persecution from Pharisees and Sadducees, endeavoured to divide among themselves those whom he saw to be violently united against himself, when he cried out, saying, *Men, brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question* Acts 23:6. And, whereas the Sadducees denied the hope and resurrection of the dead, which the Pharisees in accordance with the precepts of Holy Writ believed, a dissension was caused in the unanimity of the persecutors; and Paul escaped unhurt from the divided crowd, which before, when united, had savagely assailed him. Those, therefore, who are occupied with the desire of making peace, are to be admonished that they ought first to infuse a love of internal peace into the minds of the froward, to the end that external peace may afterwards avail to do them good; so that, while their heart is

hanging on cognition of the former, they be by no means hurried into wickedness from perception of the latter; and, while they see before them that which is supernal, they in no way turn that which is earthly to serve to their own detriment. But, if any perverse persons are such that they could not harm the good, even though they lusted to do so, between them, indeed, earthly peace ought to be established, even before they have risen to the knowledge of supernal peace; even so that they, whom the wickedness of their impiety exasperates against the loving-kindness of God, may at any rate be softened out of love of their neighbour, and, as it were from a neighbouring position, may pass to a better one, and so rise to what is as yet far from them, the peace of their Maker.

Chapter 24

How the rude in sacred learning, and those who are learned but not humble, are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 25.) Differently to be admonished are those who do not understand aright the words of the sacred Law, and those who understand them indeed aright, but speak them not humbly. For those who understand not aright the words of sacred Law are to be admonished to consider that they turn for themselves a most wholesome drought of wine into a cup of poison, and with a medicinal knife inflict on themselves a mortal wound, when they destroy in themselves what was sound by that whereby they ought, to their health, to have cut away what was diseased. They are to be admonished to consider that Holy Scripture is set as a kind of lantern for us in the night of the present life, the words whereof when they understand not aright, from light they get darkness. But in truth a perverse bent of mind would not hurry them to understand it wrong, did not pride first puff them up. For, while they think themselves wise beyond all others, they scorn to follow others to things better understood: and, in order to extort for themselves from the unskilful multitude a name for knowledge, they strive mightily both to upset the right views of others and to confirm their own perverse views. Hence it is well said by the prophet, *They have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border* Amos 1:13. For Gilead is by interpretation a heap of witness Genesis 31:47-48. And, since the whole congregation of the Church together serves by its confession for a witness to the truth, not unfitly by Gilead is expressed the Church, which witnesses by the mouth of all the faithful whatever is true concerning God . Moreover, souls are called with child, when of divine love they conceive an understanding of the Word, so that, if they come to their full time, they may bring forth their conceived intelligence in the showing forth of work. Further, to enlarge their border is to extend abroad the fame of their reputation. They have therefore ripped up the women with child of Gilead that they might enlarge their border, because heretics assuredly slay by their perverse preaching the souls of the faithful who had already

conceived something of the understanding of the truth, and extend for themselves a name for knowledge. The hearts of little ones, already big with conception of the word, they cleave with the sword of error, and, as it were, make for themselves a reputation as teachers. When, therefore, we endeavour to instruct these not to think perversely, it is necessary that we first admonish them to shun vain glory. For, if the root of elation is cut off, the branches of wrong assertion are consequently dried up. They are also to be admonished to take heed, lest, by gendering errors and discords, they turn into a sacrifice to Satan the very same law of God which has been given for hindering sacrifices to Satan. Whence the Lord complains through the prophet, saying, *I gave them grain, wine, and oil, and I multiplied to them silver and gold, which they sacrificed to Baal* Hosea 2:8. For indeed we receive grain from the Lord, when, in the more obscure sayings, the husk of the letter being drawn off, we perceive in the marrow of the Spirit the inward meaning of the Law. The Lord proffers us His wine, when He inebriates us with the lofty preaching of His Scripture. His oil also He gives us, when, by plainer precepts, He orders our life gently and smoothly. He multiplies silver, when He supplies to us eloquent utterances, full of the light of truth. With gold also He enriches us, when He irradiates our heart with an understanding of the supreme splendour. All which things heretics offer to Baal, because they pervert them in the hearts of their hearers by a corrupt understanding of them all. And of the grain of God, of His wine and oil, and likewise of His silver and gold, they offer a sacrifice to Satan, because they turn aside the words of peace to promote the error of discord. Wherefore they are to be admonished to consider that, when of their perverse mind they make discord out of the precepts of peace, they themselves, in the just judgment of God, die from the words of life.

But, on the other hand, those who understand indeed aright the words of the Law, but speak them not humbly, are to be admonished that, in divine discourses, before they put them forth to others, they should examine themselves; lest, in following up the deeds of others, they leave themselves behind; and lest, while thinking rightly of all the rest of Holy Scripture, this only thing they attend not to, what is said in it against the proud. For he is indeed a poor and unskilful physician, who would fain heal another's disease while ignorant of

that from which he himself is suffering. Those, then, who speak not the words of God humbly should certainly be admonished, that, when they apply medicines to the sick, they see to the poison of their own infection, lest in healing others they die themselves. They ought to be admonished to take heed, lest their manner of saying things be at variance with the excellence of what is said, and lest they preach one thing in their speaking and another in their outward bearing. Let them hear, therefore, what is written, *If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God* 1 Peter 4:11. If then the words they utter are not of the things that are their own, why are they puffed up on account of them as though they were their own? Let them hear what is written, *As of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ* 2 Corinthians 2:17. For he speaks of God in the sight of God, who both understands that he has received the word of preaching from God, and also seeks through it to please God, not men. Let them hear what is written, *Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord* Proverbs 16:5. For, surely, when in the Word of God he seeks his own glory, he invades the right of the giver; and he fears not at all to postpone to his own praise Him from whom he has received the very thing that is praised. Let them hear what is said to the preacher through Solomon, *Drink water out of your own cistern, and running waters of your own well. Let your fountains be dispersed abroad, and divide your waters in the streets. Have them to yourself alone, and let not strangers be partakers with you* Proverbs 5:15-17. For indeed the preacher drinks out of his own cistern, when, returning to his own heart, he first listens himself to what he has to say. He drinks the running waters of his own well, if he is watered by his own word. And in the same place it is well added, *Let your fountains be dispersed abroad, and divide your waters in the streets*. For indeed it is right that he should himself drink first, and then flow upon others in preaching. For to disperse fountains abroad is to pour outwardly on others the power of preaching. Moreover, to divide waters in the streets is to dispense divine utterances among a great multitude of hearers according to the quality of each. And, because for the most part the desire of vain glory creeps in when the Word of God has free course unto the knowledge of many, after it has been said, *Divide your waters in the streets*, it is rightly added, *Have them to yourself alone, and let not strangers be partakers with you.* He here calls malignant spirits strangers, concerning whom it is said

through the prophet in the words of one that is tempted, *Strangers are risen up against me, and strong ones have sought after my soul* Psalm 53:5. He says therefore, *Both divide your waters in the streets, and yet have them to yourself alone;* as if he had said more plainly, It is necessary for you so to serve outwardly in preaching as not to join yourself through elation to unclean spirits, lest in the ministry of the divine word you admit your enemies to be partakers with you. Thus we divide our waters in the streets, and yet alone possess them, when we both pour out preaching outwardly far and wide, and yet in no wise court human praises through it.

Chapter 25

How those are to be admonished who decline the office of preaching out of too great humility, and those who seize on it with precipitate haste.

(*Admonition* 26.) Differently to be admonished are those who, though able to preach worthily, are afraid by reason of excessive humility, and those whom imperfection or age forbids to preach, and yet precipitancy impells. For those who, though able to preach with profit, still shrink back through excessive humility are to be admonished to gather from consideration of a lesser matter how faulty they are in a greater one. For, if they were to hide from their indigent neighbours money which they possessed themselves they would undoubtedly show themselves to be promoters of their calamity. Let them perceive, then, in what guilt those are implicated who, in withholding the word of preaching from their sinning brethren, hide away the remedies of life from dying souls. Whence also a certain wise man says well, *Wisdom that is hid, and treasure that is unseen, what profit is in them both* Sirach 20:32? Were a famine wasting the people, and they themselves kept hidden grain, undoubtedly they would be the authors of death. Let them consider therefore with what punishment they must be visited who, when souls are perishing from famine of the word, supply not the bread of grace which they have themselves received. Whence also it is well said through Solomon, *He that hides grain shall be cursed among the people* Proverbs 11:26. For to hide grain is to retain with one's self the words of sacred preaching. And every one that does so is cursed among the people, because through his fault of silence only he is condemned in the punishment of the many whom he might have corrected. If persons by no means ignorant of the medicinal art were to see a sore that required lancing, and yet refused to lance it, certainly by their mere inactivity they would be guilty of a brother's death. Let them see, then, in how great guilt they are involved who, knowing the sores of souls, neglect to cure them by the lancing of words. Whence also it is well said through the prophet, *Cursed is he who keeps back his sword from blood* Jeremiah 48:10. For to keep back

the sword from blood is to hold back the word of preaching from the slaying of the carnal life. Of which sword it is said again, *And my sword shall devour flesh* Deuteronomy 32:42.

Let these, therefore, when they keep to themselves the word of preaching, hear with terror the divine sentences against them, to the end that fear may expel fear from their hearts. Let them hear how he that would not lay out his talent lost it, with a sentence of condemnation added Matthew 25:24, etc.. Let them hear how Paul believed himself to be pure from the blood of his neighbours in this, that he spared not their vices which required to be smitten, saying, *I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men: for l have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God* Acts 20:26-27. Let them hear how John is admonished by the angelic voice, when it is said, *Let him that hears say, Come* Revelation 22:17; in order doubtless that he into whose heart the internal voice has found its way may by crying aloud draw others whither he himself is carried; lest, even though called, he should find the doors shut, if he approaches Him that calls him empty. Let them hear how Esaias, because he had held his peace in the ministry of the word when illuminated by supernal light, blamed himself with a loud cry of penitence, saying *Woe unto me that I have held my peace* Isaiah 6:5. Let them hear how through Solomon the knowledge of preaching is promised to be multiplied to him who is not held back by the vice of torpor in that whereto he has already attained. For he says, *The soul which blesses shall be made fat; and he that inebriates shall be inebriated also himself* Proverbs 11:25. For he that blesses outwardly by preaching receives the fatness of inward enlargement; and, while he ceases not to inebriate the minds of his hearers with the wine of eloquence, he becomes increasingly inebriated with the drought of a multiplied gift. Let them hear how David offered this in the way of gift to God, that he did not hide the grace of preaching which he had received, saying, *Lo I will not refrain my lips, O Lord, you know, I have not hid your righteousness within my heart: I have declared your truth and your salvation* Psalm 39:10-11. Let them hear what is said by the bridegroom in his colloquy with the bride; *You that dwellest in the gardens, your friends hearken: make me to hear your voice* Canticles 8:13. For the Church dwells in the gardens, in that she keeps in a state of inward greenness the cultivated nurseries of

virtues. And that her friends hearken to her voice is, that all the elect desire the word of her preaching; which voice also the bridegroom desires to hear, because he pants for her preaching through the souls of his elect. Let them hear how Moses, when he saw that God was angry with His people, and commanded swords to be taken for executing vengeance, declared those to be on God's side who should smite the crimes of the offenders without delay, saying, *If any man is the Lord's, let him join himself to me; put every man his sword upon his thigh; go in and out from gate to gate through the midst of the camp, and slay every man his brother and friend and neighbour* Exodus 32:27. For to put sword upon thigh is to set earnestness in preaching before the pleasures of the flesh; so that, when any one is earnest to speak holy words, he must needs have a care to subdue illicit suggestions. But to go from gate to gate is to run to and fro with rebuke from vice to vice, even to every one by which death enters in unto the soul. And to pass through the midst of the camp is to live with such impartiality within the Church that one who reproves the sins of offenders turns aside to show favour to none. Whence also it is rightly added, *slay every man his brother and friend and neighbour*. He in truth slays brother and friend and neighbour who, when he finds what is worthy of punishment, spares not even those whom he loves on the score of relationship from the sword of his rebuke. If, then, he is said to be God's who is stirred up by the zeal of divine love to smite vices, he surely denies himself to be God's who refuses to rebuke the life of the carnal to the utmost of his power.

But, on the other hand, those whom imperfection or age debars from the office of preaching, and yet precipitancy impells to it, are to be admonished lest, while rashly arrogating to themselves the burden of so great an office, they cut off from themselves the way of subsequent improvement; and, while seizing out of season what they are not equal to, they lose even what they might at some time in due season have fulfilled; and be shown to have justly forfeited their knowledge because of their attempt to display it improperly. They are to be admonished to consider that young birds, if they try to fly before their wings are fully formed, are plunged low down from the place whence they fain would have risen on high. They are to be admonished to consider that, if on new buildings not yet compacted a weight of timbers be laid, there is built not a habitation, but a ruin.

They are to be admonished to consider that, if women bring forth their conceived offspring before it is fully formed, they by no means fill houses, but tombs. For hence it is that the Truth Himself, Who could all at once have strengthened whom He would, in order to give an example to His followers that they should not presume to preach while imperfect, after He had fully instructed His disciples concerning the power of preaching, immediately added, *But tarry in the city until you are endued with power from on high* Luke 24:49. For indeed we tarry together in the city, if we restrain ourselves within the enclosures of our souls from wandering abroad in speech; so that, when we are perfectly endued with divine power, we may then go out as it were from ourselves abroad, instructing others also. Hence through a certain wise man it is said, *Young man, speak scarcely in your cause; and if you have been twice asked, let your answer have a beginning* Sirach 32:10. Hence it is that the same our Redeemer, though in heaven the Creator, and even a teacher of angels in the manifestation of His power, would not become a master of men upon earth before His thirtieth year, in order, to wit, that He might infuse into the precipitate the force of a most wholesome fear, in that even He Himself, Who could not slip, did not preach the grace of a perfect life until He was of perfect age. For it is written, *When he was twelve years old, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem* Luke 2:42-43. And a little afterwards it is further said of Him, when He was sought by His parents, *They found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions* Luke 5:46. It is therefore to be weighed with vigilant consideration that, when Jesus at twelve years of age is spoken of as sitting in the midst of the doctors, He is found, not teaching, but asking questions. By which example it is plainly shown that none who is weak should venture to teach, if that child was willing to be taught by asking questions, who by the power of His divinity supplied the word of knowledge to His teachers themselves. But, when it is said by Paul to his disciple, *These things command and teach: let no man despise your adolescence* 1 Timothy 4:11-12, we must understand that in the language of Holy Writ youth is sometimes called adolescence. Which thing is the sooner evident, if we adduce the words of Solomon, who says, Rejoice O young man in your adolescence Ecclesiastes 11:9. For unless he meant the same by both words, he would not call him a young man whom he was admonishing in his adolescence.

Chapter 26

How those are to be admonished with whom everything succeeds according to their wish, and those with whom nothing does.

(*Admonition* 27.) Differently to be admonished are those who prosper in what they desire in temporal matters, and those who covet indeed the things that are of this world, but yet are wearied with the labour of adversity. For those who prosper in what they desire in temporal matters are to be admonished, when all things answer to their wishes, lest, through fixing their heart on what is given, they neglect to seek the giver; lest they love their pilgrimage instead of their country; lest they turn the supplies for their journey into hindrances to their arrival at its end; lest, delighted with the light of the moon by night, they shrink from beholding the clearness of the sun. They are, therefore, to be admonished to regard whatever things they attain in this world as consolations in calamity, but not as the rewards of retribution; but, on the other hand, to lift their mind against the favours of the world, lest they succumb in the midst of them with entire delight of the heart. For whosoever in the judgment of his heart keeps not down the prosperity he enjoys by love of a better life, turns the favours of this transitory life into an occasion of everlasting death. For hence it is that under the figure of the Idumæans, who allowed themselves to be vanquished by their own prosperity, those who rejoice in the successes of this world are rebuked, when it is said, *They have given my land to themselves for an inheritance with joy, and with their whole heart and mind* Ezekiel 36:5. In which words it is to be observed, that they are smitten with severe rebuke, not merely because they rejoice, but because they rejoice with their whole heart and mind. Hence Solomon says, *The turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them* Proverbs 1:32. Hence Paul admonishes, saying, *They that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as though they used it not* 1 Corinthians 7:30. So may the things that are supplied to us be of service to us outwardly to such extent only as not to turn our minds away from desire of supernal delight;

and thus the things that afford us succour in our state of exile may not abate the mourning of our soul's pilgrimage; and we, who see ourselves to be wretched in our severance from the things that are eternal, may not rejoice as though we were happy in the things that are transitory. For hence it is that the Church says by the voice of the elect, *His left hand is under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me* Canticles 2:6. The left hand of God, to wit prosperity in the present life, she has put under her head, in that she presses it down in the intentness of her highest love. But the right hand of God embraces her, because in her entire devotion she is encompassed with His eternal blessedness. Hence again, it is said through Solomon, *Length of days is in her right hand, but in her left hand riches and glory* Proverbs 3:16. In speaking, then, of riches and glory being placed in her left hand, he showed after what manner they are to be esteemed. Hence the Psalmist says, *Save me with your right hand* Psalm 107:7. For he says not, *with your hand*, but *with your right hand;* in order, that is, to indicate, in saying *right hand*, that it was eternal salvation that he sought. Hence again it is written, *Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed in pieces the enemies* Exodus 15:6. For the enemies of God, though they prosper in His left hand, are dashed to pieces with His right; since for the most part the present life elevates the bad, but the coming of eternal blessedness condemns them.

Those who prosper in this world are to be admonished to consider wisely how that prosperity in the present life is sometimes given to provoke people to a better life, but sometimes to condemn them more fully for ever. For hence it is that to the people of Israel the land of Canaan is promised, that they may be provoked at some time or other to hope for eternal things. For that rude nation would not have believed the promises of God afar off, had they not received also something near at hand from Him that promised. In order, therefore, that they may be the more surely strengthened unto faith in eternal things, they are drawn on, not only by hope to realities, but also by realities to hope. Which thing the Psalmist clearly testifies, saying, *He gave them the lands of the heathen, and they took the labours of the peoples in possession, that they might keep his statutes and seek after his law* Psalm 104:44. But, when the human mind follows not God in His bountiful gifts with an answer of good deeds, it is the more justly condemned from being accounted to have been kindly

nurtured. For hence it is said again by the Psalmist, *You cast them down when they were lifted up* Psalm 72:18. For in truth when the reprobate render not righteous deeds in return for divine gifts, when they here abandon themselves entirely and sink themselves in their abundant prosperity, then in that whereby they profit outwardly they fall from what is inmost. Hence it is that to the rich man tormented in hell it is said, *You in your lifetime received your good things* Luke 16:25. For on this account, though an evil man, he here received good things, that there he might receive evil things more fully, because here even by good things he had not been converted.

But, on the other hand, those who covet indeed the things that are of the world, but yet are wearied by the labour of adversity, are to be admonished to consider anxiously with how great favour the Creator and Disposer of all things watches over those whom He gives not up to their own desires. For a sick man whom the physician despairs of he allows to take whatever he longs for: but one of whom it is thought that he can be cured is prohibited from many things that he desires; and we withdraw money from boys, for whom at the same time, as our heirs, we reserve our whole patrimony. Let, then, those whom temporal adversity humiliates take joy from hope of an eternal inheritance, since Divine Providence would not curb them in order to educate them under the rule of discipline, unless it designed them to be saved for ever. Those, therefore, who in respect of the temporal things which they covet, are wearied with the labour of adversity are to be admonished to consider carefully how for the most part even the righteous, when temporal power exalts them, are caught by sin as in a snare. For, as in the former part of this volume we have already said, David, beloved of God, was more upright when in servitude than when he came to the kingdom 1 Samuel 24:18. For, when he was a servant, in his love of righteousness he feared to smite his adversary when taken; but, when he was a king, through the persuasion of lasciviousness, he put to death by a deceitful plan even a devoted soldier 2 Samuel 11:17. Who then can without harm seek wealth, or power, or glory, if they proved harmful even to him who had them unsought? Who in the midst of these things shall be saved without the labour of a great contest, if he who had been prepared for them by the choice of God was disturbed among them by the intervention of sin? They are to be admonished to consider that Solomon, who

after so great wisdom is described as having fallen even into idolatry, is not said to have had any adversity in this world before his fall; but the wisdom that had been granted him entirely left his heart, because not even the least discipline of tribulation had guarded it.

Chapter 27

How the married and the single are to be admonished.

(*Admonition* 28.) Differently to be admonished are those who are bound in wedlock and those who are free from the ties of wedlock. For those who are bound in wedlock are to be admonished that, while they take thought for each other's good, they study, both of them, so to please their consorts as not to displease their Maker; that they so conduct the things that are of this world as still not to omit desiring the things that are of God; that they so rejoice in present good as still, with earnest solicitude, to fear eternal evil; that they so sorrow for temporal evils as still to fix their hope with entire comfort on everlasting good; to the end that, while they know what they are engaged in to be transitory, but what they desire to be permanent, neither the evils of the world may break their heart while it is strengthened by the hope of heavenly good, nor the good things of the present life deceive them, while they are saddened by the apprehended evils of the judgment to come. Wherefore the mind of married Christians is both weak and steadfast, in that it cannot fully despise all temporal things, and yet can join itself in desire to eternal things. Although it lies low meanwhile in the delights of the flesh, let it grow strong in the refreshment of supernal hope: and, if it has the things that are of the world for the service of its journey, let it hope for the things that are of God for the fruit of its journey's end: nor let it devote itself entirely to what it is engaged in now, lest it fall utterly from what it ought steadfastly to hope for. Which thing Paul well expresses briefly, saying, *They that have wives as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not* 1 Corinthians 7:29-30. For he has a wife as though he had none who so enjoys carnal consolation through her as still never to be turned by love of her to evil deeds from the rectitude of a better aim. He has a wife as though he had none who, seeing all things to be transitory, endures of necessity the care of the flesh, but looks forward with longing to the eternal joys of the spirit. Moreover, to weep as though we wept not is so to lament outward adversities as still to know how to rejoice in the consolation

of eternal hope. And again, to rejoice as though we rejoiced not is so to take heart from things below as still never to cease from fear concerning the things above. In the same place also a little afterwards he aptly adds, *For the fashion of this world passes away* 1 Corinthians 7:31; as if he had said plainly, Love not the world abidingly, since the world which you love cannot itself abide. In vain you fix your affections on it as though it were continuing, while that which you love itself is fleeting. Husbands and wives are to be admonished, that those things wherein they sometimes displease one another they bear with mutual patience, and by mutual exhortations remedy. *For it is written, Bear one another's burdens, and so you shall fulfil the law of Christ* Galatians 6:2. For the law of Christ is Charity; since it has from Him bountifully bestowed on us its good things, and has patiently borne our evil things. We, therefore, then fulfil by imitation the law of Christ, when we both kindly bestow our good things, and piously endure the evil things of our friends. They are also to be admonished to give heed, each of them, not so much to what they have to bear from the other as to what the other has to bear from them. For, if one considers what is borne from one's self, one bears more lightly what one endures from another.

Husbands and wives are to be admonished to remember that they are joined together for the sake of producing offspring; and, when, giving themselves to immoderate intercourse, they transfer the occasion of procreation to the service of pleasure, to consider that, though they go not outside wedlock yet in wedlock itself they exceed the just dues of wedlock. Whence it is needful that by frequent supplications they do away their having fouled with the admixture of pleasure the fair form of conjugal union. For hence it is that the Apostle, skilled in heavenly medicine, did not so much lay down a course of life for the whole as point out remedies to the weak when he said, *It is good for a man not to touch a woman: but on account of fornication let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband* 1 Corinthians 7:1-2. For in that he premised the fear of fornication, he surely did not give a precept to such as were standing, but pointed out the bed to such as were falling, lest haply they should tumble to the ground. Whence to such as were still weak he added, *Let the husband render unto the wife her due; and likewise also the wife unto the husband* 1 Corinthians 7:3.

And, while in the most honourable estate of matrimony allowing to them something of pleasure, he added, *But this I say by way of indulgence, not by way of command* 1 Corinthians 7:6. Now where indulgence is spoken of, a fault is implied; but one that is the more readily remitted in that it consists, not in doing what is unlawful, but in not keeping what is lawful under control. Which thing Lot expresses well in his own person, when he flies from burning Sodom, and yet, finding Zoar, does not still ascend the mountain heights. For to fly from burning Sodom is to avoid the unlawful fires of the flesh. But the height of the mountains is the purity of the continent. Or, at any rate, they are as it were upon the mountain, who, though cleaving to carnal intercourse, still, beyond the due association for the production of offspring, are not loosely lost in pleasure of the flesh. For to stand on the mountain is to seek nothing in the flesh except the fruit of procreation. To stand on the mountain is not to cleave to the flesh in a fleshly way. But, since there are many who relinquish indeed the sins of the flesh, and yet, when placed in the state of wedlock, do not observe solely the claims of due intercourse, Lot went indeed out of Sodom, but yet did not at once reach the mountain heights; because a damnable life is already relinquished, but still the loftiness of conjugal continence is not thoroughly attained. But there is midway the city of Zoar, to save the weak fugitive; because, to wit, when the married have intercourse with each other even incontinently, they still avoid lapse into sin, and are still saved through mercy. For they find as it were a little city, wherein to be protected from the fire; since this married life is not indeed marvellous for virtue, but yet is secure from punishment. Whence the same Lot says to the angel, *This city is near to flee unto, and it is small, and I shall be saved therein. Is it not a little one, and my soul shall live in it* Genesis 19:20? So then it is said to be near, and yet is spoken of as a refuge of safety, since married life is neither far separated from the world, nor yet alien from the joy of safety. But the married, in this course of conduct, then preserve their lives as it were in a small city, when they intercede for each other by continual supplications. Whence it is also rightly said by the Angel to the same Lot, *See I have accepted your prayers concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow the city for the which you have spoken* Genesis 19:21. For in truth, when supplication is poured out to God, such married life is by no means condemned. Concerning which

supplication Paul also admonishes, saying, *Defraud not one the other except it be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to prayer* 1 Corinthians 7:5.

But, on the other hand, those who are not bound by wedlock are to be admonished that they observe heavenly precepts all the more closely in that no yoke of carnal union bows them down to worldly cares; that, as they are free from the lawful burden of wedlock, the unlawful weight of earthly anxiety by no means press them down; that the last day find them all the more prepared, as it finds them less encumbered; lest from being free and able, and yet neglecting, to do better things, they therefore be found deserving of worse punishment. Let them hear how the Apostle, when he would train certain persons for the grace of celibacy, did not contemn wedlock, but guarded against the worldly cares that are born of wedlock, saying, *This I say for your profit, not that I may cast a snare upon you, but for that which is comely, and that you may attend upon the Lord without hindrance* 1 Corinthians 7:3-5. For from wedlock proceed earthly anxieties; and therefore the teacher of the Gentiles persuaded his bearers to better things, lest they should be bound by earthly anxiety. The man, then, whom, being single, the hindrance of secular cares impedes, though he has not subjected himself to wedlock, has still not escaped the burdens of wedlock. The single are to be admonished not to think that they can have intercourse with disengaged women without incurring the judgment of condemnation. For, when Paul inserted the vice of fornication among so many execrable crimes, he indicated the guilt of it, saying, *Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God* 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. And again, *But fornicators and adulterers God will judge* Hebrews 13:4. They are therefore to be admonished that, if they suffer from the storms of temptation with risk to their safety, they should seek the port of wedlock. For it is written, *It is better to marry than to burn* 1 Corinthians 7:9. They come, in fact, to marriage without blame, if only they have not vowed better things. For whosoever has proposed to himself the attainment of a greater good has made unlawful the less good which before was lawful. For it is written, *No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking*

back, is fit for the kingdom of God Luke 9:62. He therefore who has been intent on a more resolute purpose is convicted of looking back, if, leaving the larger good, he reverts to the least.

Chapter 28

How those are to be admonished who have had experience of the sins of the flesh, and those who have not.

(*Admonition* 29.) Differently to be admonished are those who are conscious of sins of the flesh, and those who know them not. For those who have had experience of the sins of the flesh are to be admonished that, at any rate after shipwreck, they should fear the sea, and feel horror at their risk of perdition at least when it has become known to them; lest, having been mercifully preserved after evil deeds committed, by wickedly repeating the same they die. Whence to the soul that sins and never ceases from sin it is said, *There has come unto you a whore's forehead; you refuse to be ashamed* Jeremiah 3:3. They are therefore to be admonished to take heed, to the end that, if they have refused to keep whole the good things of nature which they have received, they at least mend them after they have been rent asunder. And they are surely bound to consider, how many in so great a number of the faithful both keep themselves undefiled and also convert others from the error of their way. What, then, will they be able to say, if, while others are standing in integrity, they themselves, even after loss, come not to a better mind? What will they be able to say, if, when many bring others also with themselves to the kingdom, they bring not back even themselves to the Lord who is waiting for them? They are to be admonished to consider past transgressions, and to shun such as are impending. Whence, under the figure of Judæa, the Lord through the prophet recalls past sins to the memory of souls corrupted in this world, to the end that they may be ashamed to be polluted in sins to come, saying, *They committed whoredoms in Egypt; they committed whoredoms in their youth: then were their breasts pressed, and the teats of their virginity were bruised* Ezekiel 23:3. For indeed breasts are pressed in Egypt, when the will of the human soul is prostituted to the base desire of this world. Teats of virginity are bruised in Egypt, when the natural senses, still whole in themselves, are vitiated by the corruption of assailing concupiscence.

Those who have had experience of the sins of the flesh are to be admonished to observe vigilantly with how great benevolence God opens the bosom of His pity to us, if after transgressions we return to Him, when He says through the prophet, *If a man put away his wife, and she go from him and become another man's, shall he return to her again? Shall not that woman be polluted and contaminated? But you have played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, says the Lord* Jeremiah 3:1. So, concerning the wife who has played the harlot and is deserted, the argument of justice is put forward: and yet to us returning after fall not justice, but pity is displayed. Whence we are surely meant to gather how great is our wickedness, if we return not, even after transgression, seeing that, when transgressing, we are spared with so great pity: or what pardon for the wicked there will be from Him who, after our sin, ceases not to call us. And indeed this mercifulness, in calling after transgression, is well expressed through the Prophet, when to man turned away from God it is said, *Your eyes shall see your teacher, and your ears shall hear the word of one behind your back admonishing you* Isaiah 30:20-21. For indeed the Lord admonished the human race to their face, when to man, created in Paradise, and standing in free will, He declared what He ought to do or not to do. But man turned his back on the face of God, when in his pride he despised His commands. Yet still God deserted him not in his pride, in that He gave the Law for the purpose of recalling man, and sent exhorting angels, and Himself appeared in the flesh of our mortality. Therefore, standing behind our back, He admonished us, in that, even though despised, He called us to the recovery of grace. What, therefore could be said generally of all alike must needs be felt specially with regard to each. For every man hears the words of God's admonition set as it were before him, when, before he commits sin, he knows the precepts of His will. For still to stand before His face is not yet to despise Him by sinning. But, when a man forsakes the good of innocence, and of choice desires iniquity, he then turns his back on the face of God . But lo, even behind his back God follows and admonishes him, in that even after sin He persuades him to return to Himself. He recalls him that is turned away, He regards not past transgressions, He opens the bosom of pity to the returning one. We hearken, then, to the voice of one behind our back admonishing us, if at least after sins we return to the Lord inviting us. We ought

therefore to feel ashamed for the pity of Him Who calls us, if we will not fear His justice: since there is the more grievous wickedness in despising Him in that, though despised, He disdains not to call us still.

But, on the other hand, those that are unacquainted with the sins of the flesh are to be admonished to fear headlong ruin the more anxiously, as they stand upon a higher eminence. They are to be admonished to be aware that the more prominent be the place they stand on, so much the more frequent are the arrows of the lier-in-wait by which they are assailed. For he is wont to rouse himself the more ardently, the more stoutly he sees himself to be vanquished: and so much the more he scorns and feels it intolerable to be vanquished, as he perceives the unbroken camp of weak flesh to be set in array against him. They are to be admonished to look up incessantly to the rewards, and then undoubtedly they will gladly tread under foot the labours of temptation which they endure. For, if attention be fixed on the attained felicity apart from the passage to it, the toil of the passage becomes light. Let them hear what is said through the Prophet; *Thus says the Lord unto the eunuchs, Whoso shall have kept my sabbaths, and chosen the things that l would, and kept my covenant, I will give unto them in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters* Isaiah 56:4-5. For they indeed are eunuchs, who, suppressing the motions of the flesh, cut off within themselves affection for wrong-doing. Moreover, in what place they are held with the Father is shown, forasmuch as in the Father's house, that is in His eternal mansion, they are preferred even before sons. Let them hear what is said through John; *These are they which have not been defiled with women; for they are virgins, and follow the Lamb wherever He goes* Revelation 14:4; and how they sing a song which no one can utter but those hundred and forty four thousand. For indeed to sing a song to the Lamb singularly is to rejoice with Him for ever beyond all the faithful, even for incorruption of the flesh. Yet the rest of the elect can hear this song, although they cannot utter it, because, through charity, they are joyful in the exaltation of those others, though they rise not to their rewards. Let those who are unacquainted with the sins of the flesh hear what the Truth in person says concerning this purity; *Not all receive this word* Matthew 19:11.

Which thing He denoted as the highest, in that He spoke of it as not belonging to all: and, in foretelling that it would be difficult to receive it, He signifies to his hearers with what caution it should be kept when received.

Those who are unacquainted with the sins of the flesh are therefore to be admonished both to know that virginity surpasses wedlock, and yet not to exalt themselves above the wedded: to the end that, while they put virginity first, and themselves last, they may both keep to that which they esteem as best, and also keep guard over themselves in not vainly exalting themselves.

They are to be admonished to consider that commonly the life of the continent is put to shame by the action of secular persons, when the latter take on themselves works beyond their condition, and the former do not stir up their hearts to the mark of their own order. Whence it is well said through the Prophet, *Be ashamed, O Sidon, says the sea* Isaiah 23:4. For Sidon is as it were brought to shame by the voice of the sea, when the life of him who is fortified, and as it were steadfast, is reproved by comparison with the life at those who are secular and fluctuating in this world. For often there are some who, returning to the Lord after sins of the flesh, show themselves the more ardent in good works as they see themselves the more liable to condemnation for bad ones: and often certain of those who persevere in purity of the flesh seeing that they have less in the past to deplore, think that the innocency of their life is fully sufficient for them, and inflame themselves with no incitements of ardour to fervour of spirit. And for the most part a life burning with love after sin becomes more pleasing to God than innocence growing torpid in security. Whence also it is said by the voice of the Judge, *Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much* Luke 7:47; and, *Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance* Luke 15:7. Which thing we the sooner gather from experience itself, if we weigh the judgments of our own mind. For we love the land which produces abundant fruit after thorns have been ploughed out of it more than that which has had no thorns, but which, when cultivated, yields a barren harvest. Those who know not the sins of the flesh are to be admonished not to prefer themselves to others for the loftiness of

their superior order, while they know not how great things are done by their inferiors better than by themselves. For in the inquisition of the righteous judge the quality of actions changes the merits of orders. For who, considering the very outward appearance of things, can be ignorant that in the nature of gems the carbuncle is preferred to the jacinth? But still a jacinth of cerulean colour is preferred to a pale carbuncle; because to the former its show of beauty supplies what the order of nature denied it, and the latter, which natural order had preferred, is debased by the quality of its colour. Thus, then, in the human race both some in the better order are the worse, and some in the worse order are the better; since these by good living transcend the lot of their lower state, and those lessen the merit of their higher place by not coming up to it in their behaviour.

Chapter 29

How they are to be admonished who lament sins of deed, and those who lament only sins of thought.

(*Admonition* 30.) Differently to be admonished are those who deplore sins of deed, and those who deplore sins of thought. For those who deplore sins of deed are to be admonished that perfected lamentations should wash out consummated evils, lest they be bound by a greater debt of perpetrated deed than they pay in tears of satisfaction for it. For it is written, *He has given us drink in tears by measure* Psalm 79:6: which means that each person's soul should in its penitence drink the tears of compunction to such extent as it remembers itself to have been dried up from God through sins. They are to be admonished to bring back their past offenses incessantly before their eyes, and so to live that these may not have to be viewed by the strict judge.

Hence David, when he prayed, saying, *Turn away your eyes from my sins* Psalm 50:11 , had said also a little before, *My fault is ever before me* Psalm 50:5; as if to say, I beseech you not to regard my sin, since I myself cease not to regard it. Whence also the Lord says through the prophet, *And I will not be mindful of your sins, but be mindful of them* Isaiah 43:25-26. They are to be admonished to consider singly all their past offenses, and, in bewailing the defilements of their former wandering one by one, to cleanse at the same time even their whole selves with tears. Whence it is well said through Jeremiah, when the several transgressions of Judæa were being considered, *My eye has shed divisions of waters* Lamentations 3:48. For indeed we shed divided waters from our eyes, when to our several sins we give separate tears. For the mind does not sorrow at one and the same time alike for all things; but, while it is more sharply touched by memory now of this fault and now of that, being moved concerning all in each, it is purged at once from all.

They are to be admonished to build upon the mercy which they crave, lest they perish through the force of immoderate affliction. For

the Lord would not set sins to be deplored before the eyes of offenders, were it His will to smite them with strict severity Himself. For it is evident that it has been His will to hide from His own judgment those whom in anticipation He has made judges of themselves. For hence it is written, *Let us come beforehand before the face of the Lord in confession* Psalm 94:2. Hence through Paul it is said, *If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged* 1 Corinthians 11:31. And again, they are to be admonished so to be confident in hope as not to grow torpid in careless security. For commonly the crafty foe, when he sees the soul which he trips up by sin to be afflicted for its fall, seduces it by the blandishments of baneful security. Which thing is figuratively expressed in the history of Dinah. For it is written, *Dinah went out to see the women of that land; and when Sichem, the son of Hemor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he loved her, and seized her, and lay with her, and defiled her by force; and his soul clave unto her, and he soothed her with kind blandishments when she was sad* Genesis 34:1-3. For indeed Dinah goes out to see the women of a foreign land, when any soul, neglecting its own concerns, and giving heed to the actions of others, wanders forth out of its own proper condition and order. And Sichem, prince of the country, overpowers it inasmuch as the devil corrupts it, when found occupied in external cares. *And his soul clave unto her*, because he regards it as united to himself through iniquity. And because, when the soul comes to a sense of its sin, it stands condemned, and would fain deplore its transgression, but the corrupter recalls before its eyes empty hopes and grounds of security to the end that he may withdraw from it the benefit of sorrow, therefore it is rightly added in the text, *And soothed her with blandishments when she was sad*. For he tells now of the heavier offenses of others, now of what has been perpetrated being nothing, now of God being merciful; or again he promises time hereafter for repentance; so that the soul, seduced by these deceptions, may be suspended from its purpose of penitence, to the end that it may receive no good hereafter, being saddened by no evil now, and that it may then be more fully overwhelmed with punishment, in that now it even rejoices in its transgressions.

But, on the other hand, those who bewail sins of thought are to be admonished to consider anxiously within the recesses of their soul

whether they have sinned in delight only, or also in consent. For commonly the heart is tempted, and in the sinfulness of the flesh experiences delight, and yet in its judgment resists this same sinfulness; so that in the secrets of thought it is both saddened by what pleases it and pleased by what saddens it. But sometimes the soul is so whelmed in a gulph of temptation as not to resist at all, but follows of set purpose that whereby it is assailed through delight; and, if outward opportunity be at hand, it soon consummates in effect its inward wishes. And certainly, if this is regarded according to the just animadversion of a strict judge, the sin is one, not of thought, but of deed; since, though the tardiness of circumstances has deferred the sin outwardly, the will has accomplished it inwardly by the act of consent.

Moreover, we have learned in the case of our first parent that we perpetrate the iniquity of every sin in three ways; that is to say, in suggestion, delight, and consent. Thus the first is perpetrated through the enemy, the second through the flesh, the third through the spirit. For the lier-in-wait suggests wrong things; the flesh submits itself to delight; and at last the spirit, vanquished by delight, consents. Whence also that serpent suggested wrong things; then Eve, as though she had been the flesh, submitted herself to delight; but Adam, as the spirit, overcome by the suggestion and the delight, assented. Thus by suggestion we have knowledge of sin, by delight we are vanquished, by consent we are also bound. Those, therefore, who bewail iniquities of thought are to be admonished to consider anxiously in what measure they have fallen into sin, to the end that they may be lifted up by a measure of lamentation corresponding to the degree of the downfall of which they are inwardly conscious; lest, if meditated evils torment them too little, they lead them on even to the perpetration of deeds. But in all this they should be alarmed in such wise that they still be by no means broken down. For often merciful God absolves sins of the heart the more speedily in that He allows them not to issue in deeds; and meditated iniquity is the more speedily loosed from not being too tightly bound by effected deed. Whence it is rightly said by the Psalmist, *I said I will declare against myself my iniquities to the Lord, and you forgave the impiety of my heart* Psalm 31:5. For in that he added impiety of heart, he indicated that it was iniquities of thought that he would declare: and in saying,

I said I will declare, and straightway subjoining, *And you forgave*, he showed how easy in such a case pardon was. For, while but promising that he would ask, he obtained what he promised to ask for; so that, since his sin had not advanced to deed, neither should his penitence go so far as to be torment; and that meditated affliction should cleanse the soul which in truth no more than meditated iniquity had defiled.

Chapter 30

How those are to be admonished who abstain not from the sins which they bewail, and those who, abstaining from them, bewail them not.

(*Admonition* 31.) Differently to be admonished are those who lament their transgressions, and yet forsake them not, and those who forsake them, and yet lament them not. For those who lament their transgressions and yet forsake them not are to be admonished to learn to consider anxiously that they cleanse themselves in vain by their weeping, if they wickedly defile themselves in their living, seeing that the end for which they wash themselves in tears is that, when clean, they may return to filth. For hence it is written, *The dog is returned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire* 2 Peter 2:22. For the dog, when he vomits, certainly casts forth the food which weighed upon his stomach; but, when he returns to his vomit, he is again loaded with what he had been relieved from. And they who mourn their transgressions certainly cast forth by confession the wickedness with which they have been evilly satiated, and which oppressed the inmost parts of their soul; and yet, in recurring to it after confession, they take it in again. But the sow, by wallowing in the mire when washed, is made more filthy. And one who mourns past transgressions, yet forsakes them not, subjects himself to the penalty of more grievous sin, since he both despises the very pardon which he might have won by his weeping, and as it were rolls himself in miry water; because in withholding purity of life from his weeping he makes even his very tears filthy before the eyes of God . Hence again it is written, *Repeat not a word in your prayer* Sirach 7:14. For to repeat a word in prayer is, after bewailing, to commit what again requires bewailing. Hence it is said through Isaiah, *Wash you, be clean* Isaiah 1:16. For he neglects being clean after washing, whosoever after tears keeps not innocency of life. And they therefore are washed, but are in no wise clean, who cease not to bewail the things they have committed, but commit again things to be bewailed. Hence through a certain wise man it is said, *He that is baptized from the touch of a dead body and touches*

it again, what avails his washing Sirach 34:30 ? For indeed he is baptized from the touch of a dead body who is cleansed from sin by weeping: but he touches a dead body after his baptism, who after tears repeats his sin.

Those who bewail transgressions, yet forsake them not, are to be admonished to acknowledge themselves to be before the eyes of the strict judge like those who, when they come before the face of certain men, fawn upon them with great submission, but, when they depart, atrociously bring upon them all the enmity and hurt they can. For what is weeping for sin but exhibiting the humility of one's devotion to God? And what is doing wickedly after weeping but putting in practice arrogant enmity against Him to whom entreaty has been made? This James attests, who says, *Whosoever will be a friend of this world becomes the enemy of God* James 4:4. Those who lament their transgressions, yet forsake them not, are to be admonished to consider anxiously that, for the most part, bad men are unprofitably drawn by compunction to righteousness, even as, for the most part, good men are without harm tempted to sin. Here indeed is found a wonderful measure of inward disposition in accordance with the requirements of desert, in that the bad, while doing something good, but still without perfecting it, are proudly confident in the midst of the very evil which even to the full they perpetrate; while the good, when tempted of evil to which they in no wise consent, plant the steps of their heart towards righteousness through humility all the more surely from their tottering through infirmity. Thus Balaam, looking on the tents of the righteous, said, *May my soul die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like theirs* . But, when the time of compunction had passed, he gave counsel against the life of those whom he had requested for himself to be like even in dying: and, when he found an occasion for the gratification of his avarice, he straightway forgot all that he had wished for himself of innocence. Hence it is that Paul, the teacher and preacher of the Gentiles, says, *I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members* Romans 7:23. He is of a truth tempted for this very purpose, that he may be the more steadfastly confirmed in good from the knowledge of his own infirmity. Why is it, then, that the one is touched with compunction, and yet draws not near unto

righteousness, while the other is tempted, and yet sin defiles him not, but for this evident reason, that neither do good things not perfected help the bad, nor bad things not consummated condemn the good?

But, on the other hand, those who forsake their transgressions, and yet mourn them not, are to be admonished not to suppose the sins to be already remitted which, though they multiply them not by action, they still cleanse away by no bewailings. For neither has a writer, when he has ceased from writing, obliterated what he had written by reason of his having added no more: neither has one who offers insults made satisfaction by merely holding his peace, it being certainly necessary for him to impugn his former words of pride by words of subsequent humility: nor is a debtor absolved by not increasing his debt, unless he also pays what he has incurred. Thus also, when we offend against God, we by no means make satisfaction by ceasing from iniquity, unless we also follow up the pleasures which we have loved by lamentations set against them. For, if no sin of deed had polluted us in this life, our very innocence would by no means suffice for our security as long as we live here, since many unlawful things would still assail our heart. With what conscience, then, can he feel safe, who, having perpetrated iniquities, is himself witness to himself that he is not innocent?

For it is not as if God were fed by our torments: but He heals the diseases of our transgressions by medicines opposed to them that we, who have departed from Him delighted by pleasures, may return to Him embittered by tears; and that, having fallen by running loose in unlawful things, we may rise by restraining ourselves even in lawful ones; and that the heart which mad joy had flooded may be burnt clean by wholesome sadness: and that what the elation of pride had wounded may be cured by the dejection of a humble life. *For hence it is written, I said unto the wicked, Deal not wickedly; and to the transgressors, lift not up the horn* Psalm 74:5. For transgressors lift up the horn, if they in no wise humble themselves to penitence after knowledge of their iniquity. Hence again it is said, *A bruised and humbled heart God does not despise* Psalm 50:19. For whosoever mourns his sins yet forsakes them not bruises indeed his heart, but scorns to humble it. But he who forsakes his sins yet mourns them

not does indeed already humble his heart, but refuses to bruise it. Hence Paul says, *And such indeed were you; but you are washed, but you are sanctified* 1 Corinthians 6:11; because, in truth, amended life sanctifies those whom the ablution of the affliction of tears cleanses through penitence. Hence Peter, when he saw some affrighted by consideration of their evil deeds, admonished them, saying, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you* Acts 2:38. For, being about to speak of baptism, he spoke first of the lamentations of penitence; that they should first bathe themselves in the water of their own affliction, and afterwards wash themselves in the sacrament of baptism. With what conscience, then, can those who neglect to weep for their past misdeeds live secure of pardon, when the chief pastor of the Church himself believed that penitence must be added even to this Sacrament which chiefly extinguishes sins?

Chapter 31

How those are to be admonished who praise the unlawful things of which they are conscious, and those who while condemning them, in no wise guard against them.

(*Admonition* 32.) Differently to be admonished are they who even praise the unlawful things which they do, and those who censure what is wrong, and yet avoid it not. For they who even praise the unlawful things which they do are to be admonished to consider how for the most part they offend more by the mouth than by deeds. For by deeds they perpetrate wrong things in their own persons only; but with the mouth they bring out wickedness in the persons of as many as there are souls of hearers, to whom they teach wicked things by praising them. They are therefore to be admonished that, if they evade the eradication of evil, they at least be afraid to sow it. They are to be admonished to let their own individual perdition suffice them. And again they are to be admonished that, if they fear not to be bad, they at least blush to be seen to be what they are. For usually a sin, when it is concealed, is shunned; because, when a soul blushes to be seen to be what nevertheless it does not fear to be, it comes in time to blush to be what it shuns being seen to be. But, when any bad man shamelessly courts notice, then the more freely he perpetrates every wickedness, the more does he come even to think it lawful; and in what he imagines to be lawful he is without doubt sunk ever more and more. Hence it is written, *They have declared their sin as Sodom, neither have they hidden it* Isaiah 3:9. For, had Sodom hidden her sin, she would still have sinned, but, in fear. But she had utterly lost the curb of fear, in that she did not even seek darkness for her sin. Whence also again it is written, *The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is multiplied* Genesis 18:20. For sin with a voice is guilt in act; but sin with even a cry is guilt at liberty.

But, on the other hand, those who censure wrong things and yet avoid them not are to be admonished to weigh circumspectly what they can say in their own excuse before the strict judgment of God, seeing they are not excused from the guilt of their crimes, even

themselves being judges. What, then, are these men but their own summoners? They give their voices against misdeeds, and deliver themselves up as guilty in their doings. They are to be admonished to perceive how it even now comes of the hidden retribution of judgment that their mind is enlightened to see the evil which it perpetrates, but strives not to overcome it; so that the better it sees the worse it may perish; because it both perceives the light of understanding, and also relinquishes not the darkness of wrong-doing. For, when they neglect the knowledge that has been given to help them, they turn it into a testimony against themselves; and from the light of understanding, which they had in truth received that they might be able to do away their sins, they augment their punishments. And, indeed, this their wickedness, doing the evil which it condemns, has already a taste here of the judgment to come; so that, while kept liable to eternal punishment, it shall not meanwhile be absolved here in its own test of itself; and that it may experience there the more grievous torments, in that here it forsakes not the evil which even itself condemns. For hence the Truth says, *That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes* Luke 12:47. Hence the Psalmist says, *Let them go down quick into hell* Psalm 54:16. For the quick know and feel what is being done about them; but the dead can feel nothing. For they would go down dead into hell if they committed what is evil without knowledge. But when they know what is evil, and yet do it, they go down quick, miserable, and feeling, into the hell of iniquity.

Chapter 32

How those are to be admonished who sin from sudden impulse and those who sin deliberately.

(*Admonition* 33.). Differently to be admonished are those who are overcome by sudden passion and those who are bound in guilt of set purpose. For those whom sudden passion overcomes are to be admonished to regard themselves as daily set in the warfare of the present life, and to protect the heart, which cannot foresee wounds, with the shield of anxious fear; to dread the hidden darts of the ambushed foe, and, in so dark a contest, to guard with continual attention the inward camp of the soul. For, if the heart is left destitute of the solicitude of circumspection, it is laid open to wounds; since the crafty enemy strikes the breast the more freely as he catches it bare of the breastplate of forethought. Those who are overcome by sudden passion are to be admonished to cease caring too much for earthly things; since, while they entangle their attention immoderately in transitory things, they are not aware of the darts of sins which pierce them. Whence, also, the utterance of one that is stricken and yet sleeps is expressed by Solomon, who says, *They have beaten me, and I was not pained; they have dragged me, and I felt it not. When shall I awake and again find wine* Proverbs 23:35? For the soul that sleeps from the care of its solicitude is beaten and feels not pain, because, as it foresees not impending evils, so neither is it aware of those which it has perpetrated. It is dragged, and in no wise feels it, because it is led by the allurements of vices, and yet is not roused to keep guard over itself. But again it wishes to awake, that it may again find wine, because, although weighed down by the sleep of its torpor from keeping guard over itself, it still strives to be awake to the cares of the world, that it may be ever drunk with pleasures; and, while sleeping to that wherein it ought to have been wisely awake, it desires to be awake to something else, to which it might have laudably slept. Hence it is written previously, *And you shall be as one that sleeps in the midst of the sea, and as a steersman that is lulled to rest, having let go the rudder* Proverbs 23:35. For he sleeps in the midst of the sea who, placed among the temptations of this

world, neglects to look out for the motions of vices that rush in upon him like impending heaps of waves. And the steersman, as it were, lets go the rudder when the mind loses the earnestness of solicitude for guiding the ship of the body. For, indeed, to let go the rudder in the sea is to leave off intentness of forethought among the storms of this life. For, if the steersman holds fast the rudder with anxious care, he now directs the ship among the billows right against them, now cleaves the assaults of the winds aslant. So, when the mind vigilantly guides the soul, it now surmounts some things and treads them down, now warily turns aside from others, so that it may both by hard exertion overcome present dangers, and by foresight gather strength against future struggle. Hence, again, of the strong warriors of the heavenly country it is said, *Every man has his sword upon his thigh because of fears in the night* Canticles 3:8. For the sword is put upon the thigh when the evil suggestion of the flesh is subdued by the sharp edge of holy preaching. But by the night is expressed the blindness of our infirmity; since any opposition that is impending in the night is not seen. Every man's sword, therefore, is put upon his thigh because of fears in the night; that is, because holy men, while they fear things which they do not see, stand always prepared for the strain of a struggle. Hence, again, it is said to the bride, *Your nose is as the tower that is in Lebanon* Canticles 7:4. For the thing which we perceive not with our eyes we usually anticipate by the smell. By the nose, also, we discern between odours and stenches. What, then, is signified by the nose of the Church but the foreseeing discernment of Saints? It is also said to be like to the tower that is in Lebanon, because their discerning foresight is so set on a height as to see the struggles of temptations even before they come, and to stand fortified against them when they do come. For things that are foreseen when future are of less force when they are present; because, when every one has become more prepared against the blow, the enemy, who supposed himself to be unexpected, is weakened by the very fact of having been anticipated.

But, on the other hand, those who of set purpose are bound in guilt, are to be admonished to perpend with wary consideration how that, when they do what is evil of their own judgment, they kindle stricter judgment against themselves; and that by so much the harder sentence will smite them as the chains of deliberation have bound

them more tightly in guilt. Perhaps they might sooner wash away their transgressions by penitence, had they fallen into them through precipitancy alone. For the sin is less speedily loosened which of set purpose is firmly bound. For unless the soul altogether despised eternal things, it would not perish in guilt advisedly. In this, then, those who perish of set purpose differ from those who fall through precipitancy; that the former, when they fall by sin from the state of righteousness, for the most part fall also into the snare of desperation. Hence it is that the Lord through the Prophet reproves not so much the wrong doings of precipitance as purposes of sin, saying, *Lest perchance my indignation come out as fire, and be inflamed, and there be none to quench it because of the wickedness of your purposes* Jeremiah 4:4. Hence, again, in wrath He says, *I will visit upon you according to the fruit of your purposes* Jeremiah 23:2. Since, then, sins which are perpetrated of set purpose differ from other sins, the Lord censures purposes of wickedness rather than wicked deeds. For in deeds the sin is often of infirmity or of negligence, but in purposes it is always of malicious intent. Contrariwise, it is well said through the Prophet in describing a blessed man, *And he sits not in the chair of pestilence* Psalm 1:1. For a chair is wont to be the seat of a judge or a president. And to sit in the chair of pestilence is to commit what is wrong judicially; to sit in the chair of pestilence is to discern with the reason what is evil, and yet deliberately to perpetrate it. He sits, as it were, in the chair of perverse counsel who is lifted up with so great elation of iniquity as to endeavour even by counsel to accomplish evil. And, as those who are supported by the dignity of the chair are set over the crowds that stand by, so sins that are purposely sought out transcend the transgressions of those who fall through precipitancy. Those, then, who even by counsel bind themselves in guilt are to be admonished hence to gather with what vengeance they must at some time be smitten, being now made, not companions, but princes, of evil-doers.

Chapter 33

How those are to be admonished who commit very small but frequent faults, and those who, while avoiding such as are very small, are sometimes plunged in such as are grievous.

(*Admonition* 34.) Differently to be admonished are those who, though the unlawful things they do are very small, yet do them frequently, and those who keep themselves from small sins, but are sometimes plunged in such as are grievous. Those who frequently transgress, though in very small things, are to be admonished by no means to consider the quality of the sins they commit, but the quantity. For, if they scorn being afraid when they weigh their deeds, they ought to be alarmed when they number them; seeing that deep gulphs of rivers are filled by small but innumerable drops of rain; and bilge-water, increasing secretly, has the same effect as a storm raging openly; and the sores that break out on the members in scab are minute; but, when a multitude of them gets possession in countless numbers, it destroys the life of the body as much as one grievous wound inflicted on the breast. Hence for certain it is written, *He that despises small things falls little by little* Sirach 19:1. For he that neglects to bewail and avoid the smallest sins falls from the state of righteousness, not indeed suddenly, but bit by bit entirely. Those who transgress frequently in very little things are to be admonished to consider anxiously how that sometimes there is worse sin in a small fault than in a greater one. For a greater fault, in that it is the sooner acknowledged to be one, is by so much the more speedily amended; but a smaller one, being reckoned as though it were none at all, is retained in use with worse effect as it is so with less concern. Whence for the most part it comes to pass that the mind, accustomed to light evils, has no horror even of heavy ones, and, being fed up by sins, comes at last to a sort of sanction of iniquity, and by so much the more scorns to be afraid in greater matters as it has learned to sin in little ones without fear.

But, on the other hand, those who keep themselves from small sins, but are sometimes plunged in grievous ones, are to be admonished anxiously to apprehend the state they are in; how that, while their heart is lifted up for very small things guarded against, they are so swallowed up in the very gulph of their own elation as to perpetrate others that are more grievous, and, while they outwardly master little ills, but are puffed up inwardly with vain glory, they prostrate their soul, overcome within itself by the sickness of pride, amid greater ills even outwardly. Those, then, who keep themselves from little faults, but are sometimes plunged in such as are grievous, are to be admonished to take care lest they fall inwardly where they suppose themselves to be standing outwardly, and lest, according to the retribution of the strict judge, elation on account of lesser righteousness become a way to the pitfall of more grievous sin. For such as, vainly elated, attribute their keeping of the least good to their own strength, being justly left to themselves are overwhelmed in greater sins; and by falling they learn that their standing was not of themselves, so that immeasurable ills may humble the heart that is exalted by the smallest good. They are to be admonished to consider that, while in their more grievous faults they bind themselves in deep guilt, they nevertheless for the most part sin worse in the little faults which they guard against; because, while in the former they do what is wicked, in the latter they hide from men that they are wicked. Whence it comes to pass that, when they perpetrate greater evils before God, it is a case of open iniquity; and when they are careful to observe small good things before men, it is a case of pretended holiness. For hence it is that it is said of the Pharisees, *Straining out a gnat, but swallowing a camel* Matthew 23:24. As if it were said plainly. The least evils you discern; the greater you devour. Hence it is that they are again reproved by the mouth of the Truth, when they are told, *You tithe mint and anise and cummin, and omit the weightier matters of the Law, judgment and mercy and truth* Matthew 23:23. For neither is it to be carelessly heard that, when He said that the least things were tithed, He chose indeed to mention the lowest of herbs, but yet such as are sweet-smelling; in order, surely, to show that, when pretenders observe small things, they seek to extend for themselves the odour of a holy reputation; and, though they omit to fulfil the greatest things, they still observe such of the smallest as smell sweetly far and wide in human judgment.

Chapter 34

How those are to be admonished who do not even begin good things, and those who do not finish them when begun.

(*Admonition* 35.) Differently to be admonished are they who do not even begin good things, and those who in no wise complete such as they have begun. For as to those who do not even begin good things, for them the first need is, not to build up what they may wholesomely love, but to demolish that wherein they are wrongly occupied. For they will not follow the untried things they hear of, unless they first come to feel how pernicious are the things that they have tried; since neither does one desire to be lifted up who knows not the very fact that he has fallen; nor does one who feels not the pain of a wound seek any healing remedy. First, then, it is to be shown to them how vain are the things that they love, and then at length to be carefully made known to them how profitable are the things that they let slip. Let them first see that what they love is to be shunned, and afterwards perceive without difficulty that what they shun is to be loved. For they sooner accept the things which they have not tried, if they recognize as true whatever discourse they may hear concerning the things that they have tried. So then they learn to seek true good with fullness of desire, when they have learned with certainty of judgment how vainly they have held to what was false. Let them be told, therefore, both that present good things will soon pass away from enjoyment, and also that the account to be given of them will nevertheless endure, without passing away, for vengeance; since both what pleases them is withdrawn from them now against their will, and what pains them is reserved them, also against their will, for punishment. Thus may they be wholesomely filled with alarm by the same things in which they harmfully take delight; so that when the stricken soul, in sight of the deep ruin of its fall, perceives that it has reached a precipice, it may retrace its steps backward, and, fearing what it had loved, may learn to esteem highly what it once despised.

For hence it is that it is said to Jeremiah when sent to preach, *See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to scatter, and to build, and to plant* Jeremiah 1:10. Because, unless he first destroyed wrong things, he could not profitably build right things; unless he plucked out of the hearts of his hearers the thorns of vain love, he would certainly plant to no purpose the words of holy preaching. Hence it is that Peter first overthrows, that he may afterwards build up, when he in no wise admonished the Jews as to what they were now to do, but reproved them for what they had done, saying, *Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by powers and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as you yourselves know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have by the hands of wicked men crucified and slain; whom God has raised up, having loosed the pains of hell* Acts 2:22-24; in order, to wit, that having been thrown down by a recognition of their cruelty, they might hear the building up of holy preaching by so much the more profitably as they anxiously sought it. Whence also they immediately replied, *What then shall we do, men and brethren?* And it is presently said to them, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you* (Ibid. 37, 38). Which words of building up they would surely have despised, had they not first wholesomely become aware of the ruin of their throwing down. Hence it is that Saul, when the light from heaven shone upon him, did not hear immediately what he was to do aright, but what he had done wrong. For, when, fallen to the earth, he enquired, saying, *Who are You, Lord?* it was straightway replied, *I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you persecute*. And when he immediately replied, *Lord, what will You have me to do?* it is added at once, *Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told you there what you must do* Acts 9:4, etc.; 22:8, etc.. Lo, the Lord, speaking from heaven, reproved the deeds of His persecutor, and yet did not at once show him what he had to do. Lo, the whole fabric of his elation had already been thrown down and then, humble after his downfall, he sought to be built up: and when pride was thrown down, the words of building up were still kept back; to wit, that the cruel persecutor might long lie overthrown, and rise afterwards the more firmly built in good as he had fallen utterly upset from his former error. Those, then, who have not as yet begun to do any good are first to be

overthrown by the hand of correction from the stiffness of their iniquity, that they may afterwards be lifted up to the state of well-doing. For this cause also we cut down the lofty timber of the forest, that we may raise it up in the roof of a building: but yet it is not placed in the fabric suddenly; in order, that is, that its vicious greenness may first be dried out: for the more the moisture thereof is exuded in the lowest, by so much the more solidly is it elevated to the topmost places.

But, on the other hand, those who in no wise complete the good things they have begun are to be admonished to consider with cautious circumspection how that, when they accomplish not their purposes, they tear up with them even the things that had been begun. For, if that which is seen to be a thing to be done advances not through assiduous application, even that which had been well done falls back. For the human soul in this world is, as it were, in the condition of a ship ascending against the stream of a river: it is never suffered to stay in one place, since it will float back to the nethermost parts unless it strive for the uppermost. If then the strong hand of the worker carry not on to perfection the good things begun, the very slackness in working fights against what has been wrought. For hence it is that it is said through Solomon, *He that is feeble and slack in work is brother to him that wasts his works* Proverbs 18:9. For in truth he who does not strenuously execute the good things he has begun imitates in the slackness of his negligence the hand of the destroyer. Hence it is said by the Angel to the Church of Sardis, *Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I find not your works complete before my God* Revelation 3:2. Thus, because the works had not been found complete before his God, he foretold that those which remained, even such as had been done, were about to die. For, if that which is dead in us be not kindled into life, that which is retained as though still alive is extinguished too. They are to be admonished that it might have been more tolerable for them not to have laid hold of the right way than, having laid hold of it, to turn their backs upon it. For unless they looked back, they would not grow weak with any torpor with regard to their undertaken purpose. Let them hear, then, what is written, *It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after they have known it, to be turned*

backward 2 Peter 2:21. Let them hear what is written; *I would that you were cold or hot: but, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to spew you out of my mouth* Revelation 3:15-16. For he is hot who both takes up and completes good purposes; but he is cold who does not even begin any to be completed. And as transition is made through lukewarmness from cold to heat, so through lukewarmness there is a return from heat to cold. Whosoever, then, has lost the cold of unbelief so as to live, but in no wise passes beyond lukewarmness so as to go on to burn, he doubtless, despairing of heat, while he lingers in pernicious lukewarmness, is in the way to become cold. But, as before lukewarmness there is hope in cold, so after cold there is despair in lukewarmness. For he who is yet in his sins loses not his trust in conversion: but he who after conversion has become lukewarm has withdrawn the hope that there might have been of the sinner. It is required, then, that every one be either hot or cold, lest, being lukewarm, he be spewed out: that is, that either, being not yet converted, he still afford hope of his conversion, or, being already converted, he be fervent in virtues; lest he be spewed out as lukewarm, in that he goes back in torpor from purposed heat to pernicious cold.

Chapter 35

How those are to be admonished who do bad things secretly and good things openly, and those who do contrariwise.

(*Admonition* 36.) Differently to be admonished are those who do bad things in secret and good things publicly, and those who hide the good things they do, and yet in some things done publicly allow ill to be thought of them. For those who do bad things in secret and good things publicly are to be admonished to consider with what swiftness human judgments flee away, but with what immobility divine judgments endure. They are to be admonished to fix the eyes of their mind on the end of things; since, while the attestation of human praise passes away, the heavenly sentence, which penetrates even hidden things, grows strong unto lasting retribution. When, therefore, they set their hidden wrong things before the divine judgment, and their right things before human eyes, both without a witness is the good which they do publicly, and not without an eternal witness is their latent transgression. So by concealing their faults from men, and displaying their virtues, they both discover while they hide what they deserve to be punished for, and hide while they discover what they might have been rewarded for. Such persons the Truth calls whited sepulchres, beautiful outward, but full of dead men's bones Matthew 23:17; because they cover up the evil of vices within, but by the exhibition of certain works flatter human eyes with the mere outward colour of righteousness. They are therefore to be admonished not to despise the right things they do, but to believe them to be of better desert. For those greatly misjudge their own good things who think human favour sufficient for their reward. For when transitory praise is sought in return for right doing, a thing worthy of eternal reward is sold for a mean price. As to which price being received, indeed, the Truth says, *Verily I say unto you, they have received their reward* Matthew 6:2-6. They are to be admonished to consider that, when they prove themselves bad in hidden things, but yet offer themselves as examples publicly in good works, they show that what they shun is to be followed; they cry aloud that what

they hate is to be loved: in fine, they live to others, and die to themselves.

But, on the other hand, those who do good things in secret, and yet in some things done publicly allow evil to be thought of them, are to be admonished that, while what is good in them quickens themselves in the virtue of well-doing, they themselves slay not others through the example of a bad repute; that they love not their neighbours less than themselves, nor, while themselves imbibing a wholesome drought of wine, pour out a pestiferous cup of poison to minds intent on observing them. These assuredly in one way little help the life of their neighbour, and in the other greatly burden it, while they both study to do what is right unseen, and also, in some things in which they set an example, sow from themselves the seeds of evil. For whosoever is already competent to tread under foot the lust of praise commits a fraud on edification, if he conceals the good things he does; and he steals away, as it were, the roots of germination after having cast the seed, who shows not forth the work that is to be imitated. For hence in the Gospel the Truth says, *That they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven* Matthew 5:16. But then there comes also this sentence, which has the appearance of enjoining something very different, namely, *Take heed that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them* Matthew 6:1.

What means then its being enjoined both that our work is so to be done as not to be seen, and yet that it should be seen, but that the things we do are to be hidden, lest we ourselves should be praised, and yet to be shown, that we may increase the praise of our heavenly Father? For, when the Lord forbade us to do our righteousness before men, He straightway added, *To be seen of them*. And again, when He enjoined that our good works were to be seen of men, He immediately subjoined, *That they may glorify your Father which is in heaven* Matthew 5:16. In what manner, then, they are to be seen, and in what manner they are not to be seen, He showed in the end of His injunctions, to the effect that the mind of the worker should not seek for his work to be seen on his own account, and yet that on account of the glory of the heavenly Father he should not conceal it. Whence it commonly comes to pass that a good work is both in secret when it

is done publicly, and again in public when it is done secretly. For he that in a public good work seeks not his own, but the heavenly Father's glory, hides what he has done, in that he has had Him only for a witness whom he has desired to please. And he who in his secret good work covets being observed and praised has done this before men, even though no one has seen what he has done; because he has adduced so many witnesses to his good work as he has sought human praises in his heart. But when bad repute, so far as it prevails without sin committed, is not obliterated from the minds of lookers on, the cup of guilt is offered, in the way of example, to all who think evil. Whence also it generally comes to pass, that those who carelessly allow evil to be thought of them do not indeed commit wickedness in their own persons, but still, through those who may have taken example from them, offend in a more manifold way. Hence it is that Paul says to those who ate certain unclean things without pollution, but in this their eating put a stumbling-block of temptation in the way of the imperfect, *Take heed, lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak* 1 Corinthians 8:9; and again, *And by your conscience shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died. But when you so sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ* 1 Corinthians 2:12. Hence it is that Moses, when he said, *You shall not curse the deaf*, at once added, *Nor put a stumblingblock before the blind* Leviticus 19:14. For to curse the deaf is to disparage one who is absent and does not hear; but to put a stumbling-block before the blind is to act indeed with discernment, but yet to give cause of offense to him who has not the light of discernment.

Chapter 36

Concerning the exhortation to be addressed many at once, that It may so aid the virtues of each among them that vices contrary to such virtues may not grow up through it.

These are the things that a Bishop of souls should observe in the diversity of his preaching, that he may solicitously oppose suitable medicines to the diseases of his several hearers. But, whereas it is a matter of great anxiety, in exhorting individuals, to be of service to them according to their individual needs, since it is a very difficult thing to instruct each person in what concerns himself, dealing out due consideration to each case, it is yet far more difficult to admonish innumerable hearers labouring under various passions at one and the same time with one common exhortation. For in this case the speech is to be tempered with such art that, the vices of the hearers being diverse, it may be found suitable to them severally, and yet be not diverse from itself; that it pass indeed with one stroke through the midst of passions, but, after the manner of a two-edged sword, cut the swellings of carnal thoughts on either side; so that humility be so preached to the proud that yet fear be not increased in the timid; that confidence be so infused into the timid that yet the unbridled licence of the proud grow not; that solicitude in well doing be so preached to the listless and torpid that yet licence of immoderate action be not increased in the unquiet; that bounds be so set on the unquiet that yet careless torpor be not produced in the listless; that wrath be so extinguished in the impatient that yet negligence grow not in the easy and soft-hearted; that the soft-hearted be so inflamed to zeal that yet fire be not added to the wrathful; that liberality in giving be so infused into the niggardly that yet the reins of profusion be in no wise loosened to the prodigal; that frugality be so preached to the prodigal that yet care to keep perishable things be not increased in the niggardly; that marriage be so praised to the incontinent that yet those who are already continent be not called back to voluptuousness; that virginity of body be so praised to the continent that yet fecundity of the flesh come not to be despised by the married. Good things are so to be preached that ill

things be not assisted sideways. The highest good is so to be praised that the lowest be not despaired of. The lowest is so to be cherished that there be no cessation of striving for the highest from the lowest being thought sufficient.

Chapter 37

Of the exhortation to be applied to one person, who labours under contrary passions.

It is indeed a serious labour for the preacher to keep an eye in his public preaching to the hidden affections and motives of individuals, and, after the manner of the palæstra, to turn himself with skill to either side: yet he is worn with much severer labour, when he is compelled to preach to one person who is subject to contrary vices. For it is commonly the case that some one is of too joyous a constitution, and yet sadness suddenly arising immoderately depresses him. The preacher, therefore, must give heed that the temporary sadness be so removed that the constitutional joyousness be not increased; and that the constitutional joyousness be so curbed that the temporary sadness be not aggravated. This man is burdened by a habit of immoderate precipitancy, and yet sometimes the power of a suddenly-born fear impedes his doing what ought to be done in haste. That man is burdened by a habit of immoderate fear, and yet sometimes is impelled in what he desires by the rashness of immoderate precipitancy. In the one, therefore, let the fear that suddenly arises be so repressed that his long-nourished precipitancy do not further grow. In the other let the precipitancy that suddenly arises be so repressed that yet the fear stamped on him by constitution do not gather strength. And, indeed, what is there strange in the physicians of souls being on their guard in these things, when those who heal not hearts but bodies govern themselves with so great skill of discernment? For it is often the case that extreme faintness weighs down a weak body, which faintness ought to be met by strong remedies; but yet the weak body cannot bear a strong remedy. He, therefore, who treats the case gives heed so to draw off the supervening malady that the pre-existing weakness of the body be in no wise increased, lest perchance the faintness should pass away with the life. He compounds, then, his remedy with such discernment as at one and the same time to meet both the faintness and the weakness. If, then, medicine for the body administered without division can be of service in a divided way, why should not

medicine for the soul, applied in one and the same preaching, be of power to meet moral diseases in diverse directions: which medicine is the more subtle in its operation in that invisible things are dealt with?

Chapter 38

That sometimes lighter vices are to be left alone, that more grievous ones may be removed.

But since, when the sickness of two vices attacks a man, one presses upon him more lightly, and the other perchance more heavily, it is undoubtedly right to haste to the succour of that through which there is the more rapid tendency to death. And, if the one cannot be restrained from causing the death which is imminent unless the other which is contrary to it increase, the preacher must be content by skilful management in his exhortation to suffer one to increase, to the end that he may keep the other back from causing the death which is imminent. When he does this, he does not aggravate the disease, but preserves the life of his sufferer to whom he administers the medicine, that he may find a fitting time for searching out means of recovery. For there is often one who, while he puts no restraint on his gluttony in food, is presently pressed hard by the stings of lechery, which is on the point of overcoming him, and who, when, terrified by the fear of this struggle, he strives to restrain himself through abstinence, is harassed by the temptation of vain-glory: in which case certainly one vice is by no means extinguished unless the other be fostered. Which plague then should be the more ardently attacked but that which presses on the man the more dangerously? For it is to be tolerated that through the virtue of abstinence arrogance should meanwhile grow against one that is alive, lest through gluttony lechery should cut him off from life entirely. Hence it is that Paul, when he considered that his weak hearer would either continue to do evil or rejoice in the reward of human praise for well-doing, said, *Will you not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same* Romans 13:3. For it is not that good things should be done in order that no human power may be feared, or that the glory of transitory praise may be thereby won; but, considering that the weak soul could not rise to so great strength as to shun at the same time both wickedness and praise, the excellent preacher in his admonition offered something and took away something. For by conceding mild ailments he drew off keener ones;

that, since the mind could not rise all at once to the relinquishing of all its vices, it might, while left in familiarity with some one of them, be taken off without difficulty from another.

Chapter 39

That deep things ought not to be preached at all to weak souls.

But the preacher should know how to avoid drawing the mind of his hearer beyond its strength, lest, so to speak, the string of the soul, when stretched more than it can bear, should be broken. For all deep things should be covered up before a multitude of hearers, and scarcely opened to a few. For hence the Truth in person says, *Who, do you think, is the faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord has appointed over his household, to give them their measure of wheat in due season?* Luke 12:42. Now by a measure of wheat is expressed a portion of the Word, lest, when anything is given to a narrow heart beyond its capacity, it be spilt. Hence Paul says, *I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. As it were to babes in Christ, I have given you milk to drink, and not meat* 1 Corinthians 3:1-2. Hence Moses, when he comes on from the sanctuary of God, veils his shining face before the people; because in truth He shows not to multitudes the secrets of inmost brightness Exodus 34:33-35. Hence it is enjoined on him by the Divine voice that if any one should dig a cistern, and not cover it, and an ox or ass should fall into it, he should pay the price Exodus 21:33-34, because when one who has arrived at the deep streams of knowledge covers them not up before the brutish hearts of his hearers, he is adjudged as liable to penalty, if through his words a soul, whether clean or unclean, be caught on a stumbling-stone. Hence it is said to the blessed Job, *Who has given understanding unto the cock?* Job 38:36. For a holy preacher, crying aloud in time of darkness, is as the cock crowing in the night, when he says, *It is even now the hour for us to arise from sleep* Romans 13:11. And again, *Awake you righteous, and sin not* 1 Corinthians 15:34. But the cock is wont to utter loud chants in the deeper hours of the night; but, when the time of morning is already at hand, he frames small and slender tones; because, in fact, he who preaches aright cries aloud plainly to hearts that are still in the dark, and shows them nothing of hidden mysteries, that they may then hear the more subtle

teachings concerning heavenly things, when they draw near to the light of truth.

Chapter 40

Of the work and the voice of preaching.

But in the midst of these things we are brought back by the earnest desire of charity to what we have already said above; that every preacher should give forth a sound more by his deeds than by his words, and rather by good living imprint footsteps for men to follow than by speaking show them the way to walk in. For that cock, too, whom the Lord in his manner of speech takes to represent a good preacher, when he is now preparing to crow, first shakes his wings, and by smiting himself makes himself more awake; since it is surely necessary that those who give utterance to words of holy preaching should first be well awake in earnestness of good living, lest they rouse others with their voice while themselves torpid in performance; that they should first shake themselves up by lofty deeds, and then make others solicitous for good living; that they should first smite themselves with the wings of their thoughts; that whatsoever in themselves is unprofitably torpid they should discover by anxious investigation, and correct by strict animadversion, and then at length set in order the life of others by speaking; that they should take heed to punish their own faults by bewailings, and then denounce what calls for punishment in others; and that, before they give voice to words of exhortation, they should proclaim in their deeds all that they are about to speak.

Pastoral Rule (Book IV)

How the Preacher, When He Has Accomplished All Aright, Should Return to Himself, Lest Either His Life or His Preaching Lift Him Up.

But since often, when preaching is abundantly poured forth in fitting ways, the mind of the speaker is elevated in itself by a hidden delight in self-display, great care is needed that he may gnaw himself with the laceration of fear, lest he who recalls the diseases of others to health by remedies should himself swell through neglect of his own health; lest in helping others he desert himself, lest in lifting up others he fall. For to some the greatness of their virtue has often been the occasion of their perdition; causing them, while inordinately secure in confidence of strength, to die unexpectedly through negligence. For virtue strives with vices; the mind flatters itself with a certain delight in it; and it comes to pass that the soul of a well-doer casts aside the fear of its circumspection, and rests secure in self-confidence; and to it, now torpid, the cunning seducer enumerates all things that it has done well, and exalts it in swelling thoughts as though superexcellent beyond all beside. Whence it is brought about, that before the eyes of the just judge the memory of virtue is a pitfall of the soul; because, in calling to mind what it has done well, while it lifts itself up in its own eyes, it falls before the author of humility. For hence it is said to the soul that is proud, *For that you are more beautiful, go down, and sleep with the uncircumcised* Ezekiel 32:19: as if it were plainly said, Because you lift yourself up for the comeliness of your virtues, you are driven by your very beauty to fall. Hence under the figure of Jerusalem the soul that is proud in virtue is reproved, when it is said, *You were perfect in my comeliness which I had put upon you, says the Lord, and having confidence in your beauty you have committed fornication in your renown* (Ibid. 16:14, 15). For the mind is lifted up by confidence in its beauty, when, glad for the merits of its virtues, it glories within itself in security. But through this same confidence it is led to fornication; because, when the soul is deceived by its own thoughts, malignant spirits, which take possession of it, defile it through the seduction of innumerable vices. But it is to be noted that it is said, *You have committed fornication in your renown:* for when the soul

leaves off regard for the supernal ruler, it immediately seeks its own praise, and begins to arrogate to itself all the good which it has received for showing forth the praise of the giver; it desires to spread abroad the glory of its own reputation, and busies itself to become known as one to be admired of all. In its renown, therefore, it commits fornication, in that, forsaking the wedlock of a lawful bed, it prostitutes itself to the defiling spirit in its lust of praise. Hence David says, *He delivered their virtue into captivity, and their beauty into the enemy's hands* Psalm 67:61. For virtue is delivered into captivity and beauty into the enemy's hands, when the old enemy gets dominion over the deceived soul because of elation in well doing. And yet this elation in virtue tempts somewhat, though it does not fully overcome, the mind even of the elect.

But it, when lifted up, is forsaken, and, being forsaken, it is recalled to fear. For hence David says again, *I said in mine abundance, I shall not be moved for ever* Psalm 29:7. But he added a little later what he underwent for having been puffed up with confidence in his virtue, *You turned your face from me, and I was troubled* Psalm 5:8. As if he would say plainly, I believed myself strong in the midst of virtues, but, being forsaken, I become aware how great was my infirmity. Hence he says again, *I have sworn and am steadfastly purposed to keep the judgments of your righteousness* Psalm 119:106. But, because it was beyond his powers to continue the keeping which he swore, straightway, being troubled, he found his weakness. Whence also he all at once betook himself to the aid of prayer, saying, *I am humbled all together; quicken me, O Lord, according to Your word* Psalm 118:107. But sometimes Divine government, before advancing a soul by gifts, recalls to it the memory of its infirmity, lest it be puffed up for the virtues it has received. Whence the Prophet Ezekiel, before being led to the contemplation of heavenly things, is first called a son of man; as though the Lord plainly admonished him, saying, Lest you should lift up your heart in elation for these things which you see, perpend cautiously what you are; that, when you penetrate the highest things, you may remember that you are a man, to the end that, when rapt beyond yourself, you may be recalled in anxiety to yourself by the curb of your infirmity. Whence it is needful that, when abundance of virtues flatters us, the eye of the soul should return to its own weaknesses, and salubriously depress itself; that it

should look, not at the right things that it has done, but those that it has left undone; so that, while the heart is bruised by recollection of infirmity, it may be the more strongly confirmed in virtue before the author of humility. For it is generally for this purpose that Almighty God, though perfecting in great part the minds of rulers, still in some small part leaves them imperfect; in order that, when they shine with wonderful virtues, they may pine with disgust at their own imperfection, and by no means lift themselves up for great things, while still labouring in their struggle against the least; but that, since they are not strong enough to overcome in what is last and lowest, they may not dare to glory in their chief performances.

See now, good man, how, compelled by the necessity laid upon me by your reproof, being intent on showing what a Pastor ought to be, I have been as an ill-favoured painter pourtraying a handsome man; and how I direct others to the shore of perfection, while myself still tossed among the waves of transgressions. But in the shipwreck of this present life sustain me, I beseech you, by the plank of your prayer, that, since my own weight sinks me down, the hand of your merit may raise me up.